

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

CHRISTMAS

NUMBER



The Spirit of Christmas.

DRAWN BY ARTHUR BUTCHER.



Illustrated by A. FORESTIER.

OLIVIA sat bolt upright in her mother's withdrawing-room stitching at her sampler, with blue eyes so discreetly lowered that no one seeing her would have supposed how she longed to be out in the garden racing to and fro through the crisp, white snow pelting Ned and Roger, her younger brothers, who were having a brave time out there, whilst she, alas! was forced to sit prim, as became a young gentlewoman of seventeen years of age, doing her needlework whilst her mother talked to Aunt Agatha, who had come in her big, lumbering coach to spend a night on her way to her brother's house at Lampton, where she was passing the Christmas season.

Olivia knew very little of Uncle Lionel, saving that he was Sir Lionel Courtleigh of Courtleigh Park, and had one son, Anthony, who was quite old—perhaps twenty-six or twenty-seven.

Olivia thrilled as a shrill shout of defiance from the garden announced a successful sortie by Ned on Roger's defences. *How* she wished . . .

Then suddenly the thought of the boys, the snow castle, and all the merry fun the others were enjoying without her were forgotten as Olivia heard her own name mentioned.

"I vow," Aunt Agatha was saying, "I should be asking you to let me take Livy along with me to Lampton if it were not for fear the child would be falling in love with Tony or some such nonsense. It is too distressing that Celia should fall ill just at Christmas time and not be able to accompany me. And the measles, too! So impossible!"

Olivia's hand shook as she dug her needle into the stretched canvas. Horrors! The idea of being taken away from the boys at Christmas time.

Then, in the midst of dismay, came her mother's words, clear, distinct as any sentence of doom—

"If it would please you to take Olivia with you, Agatha, you are welcome to her company. As for falling in love, you need not fear that. Livy is still a child, with never a thought yet for sweethearting, and prefers a romp with her brothers to any dressing-up in fal-dals."

It was in Olivia's mind to jump up, heedless of manners and decorum, and cry aloud in entreaty that she could not and would not go away from home for Christmas.

But young maids in those days were too well trained to resent their elders' pleasure openly, and so in the end it was settled, without any reference to Olivia's wishes, that on the morrow she should be packed off with Aunt Agatha and Aunt Agatha's maid, pug-dog, page, and the rest of the fine lady's paraphernalia, to spend Christmas at Courtleigh Park.

True, Olivia was able to voice her feelings during one tragic half-hour when, with Roger's and Ned's arms round her neck, the three wept in chorus, whilst they vowed that Aunt Agatha was a hateful old woman to have suggested so odious a proposition.

Poor Livy! She looked the picture for a Christian Martyr as she stood in the hall ready for departure, her small round face pale and woe-begone, her big brown eyes full of tragedy, whilst golden curls formed the aureola under her beaver bonnet.

But, though the tears overflowed in bidding farewell to Madam Mother and the boys, they soon dried during the excitement of her long coach drive.

Aunt Agatha was kindly, for all her grandeur, and told the

child rallyingly that she need not fear they were going to eat her in mistake for the Christmas goose at Courtleigh.

Olivia would have liked to ask questions about the unknown relatives, but forbore, since Aunt Agatha was inclined to doze, and her niece beside her sat silent and demure, her eyes fixed on the wintry landscape, whilst—from thoughts of the boys and all the Christmas festivities she was missing at home—she began to speculate on those to which she was going.

She had once seen Uncle Lionel, and recalled the little shiver of fear she had experienced at his stately appearance. Aunt Anne, too, she vaguely pictured as a little fussy lady who was always anxious. And then there was Anthony—the very ancient cousin of twenty-six.

Olivia, in her corner with her sampler, had heard Aunt Agatha talking a great deal about this Anthony, and how his father was set on his wedding Miss Cynthia Rallings, a great heiress and belle to boot; but how Anthony was perverse and over-wild, following his own way and mixing himself up in Jacobite plots which would bring him ere long to the gallows.

Olivia knew all about Jacobite plots, since it was one of her favourite tales to listen to how Lady Nethisdale had saved her husband's life seven years ago in the '15.

But never had she met a Jacobite before, and wondered . . . wondered whether she would be afraid of this one; or did Aunt Agatha mean Cousin Anthony was only pretending to be a Jacobite . . . because he had nothing better to do . . . and . . . *that* was why it would be good for him to marry . . . Cynthia Rallings, who would keep him well out of mischief?

Olivia's musings were getting very jumbled long before the coach stopped before the big grey house with the snow sparkling round the sills of mullioned windows and covering the ivy in a white loveliness. Indeed, she was only vaguely conscious of being lifted out and carried up a shallow flight of steps, to be set down in a brightly lighted hall, where she blinked and gaped like a new-fledged owlet.

Alack! she was so sleepy that she forgot her curtsies and manners completely, to be roused to the sense of her shortcomings by the sound of a gay laugh as someone gently

removed her fur cloak, crying—

"Poor little coz. It seems a shame to awake her."

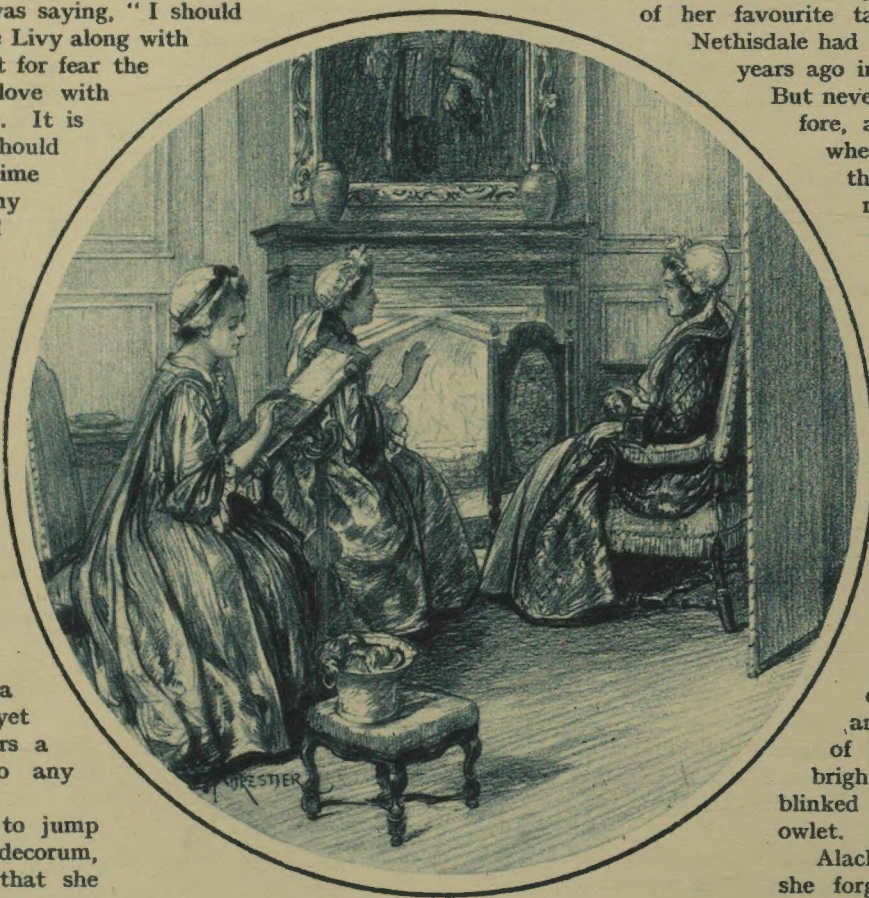
Then all at once she realised where she was, and fell into a panic.

Why, there was Uncle Lionel, tall and stern, talking to Aunt Agatha, whilst Aunt Anne fussed over the luggage and bestowal of Parkins, the page, and the pug, leaving her niece to the ministrations of the tall, handsome gentleman who did not look old enough to be Cousin Anthony—and yet . . .

Her cavalier himself interrupted the reflections by tossing her cloak to a maid and taking both cold little hands in his.

"So you are my cousin Olivia?" he asked, smiling.

It was Anthony, then? Anthony, the embryo Jacobite, who was to be kept out of mischief by wedding with Mistress Cynthia Rallings. As Olivia looked into the lean, handsome face, with its merry grey eyes, and dark, slightly powdered hair, marking, too, the tall, straight figure and broad shoulders, she wondered *why* she had pictured such a very different cousin from this.



Olivia sat bolt upright in her mother's withdrawing-room stitching at her sampler.



She curtsied shyly.

She curtsied shyly, her lashes lying on her smooth pink cheek as she remembered that she had added the offence of staring to the rest of her shortcomings.

And la! how drowsy she must have been not to hear her aunt's introduction!

Then, in the midst of her distress, Aunt Anne bustled up to her and whirled her and Aunt Agatha upstairs to a big, snug room, hung with dark blue tapestries, and with a blazing fire on the hearth to welcome them.

When Olivia descended later, in her flowered tansy frock and ribboned mob-cap, she looked quite a different being from the half-frozen, wholly scared little traveller. And, if she were still shy, who so clever at setting her at her ease as Cousin Anthony—who took possession of her whilst the elders played cards with the local parson, and showed her over the dear old house, with its galleries, saloons, nooks, niches, and, last but not least—its secret room.

Olivia was not at all shy by the end of an hour, and found herself chatting away to this new friend, of home, of Roger, Ned, and a hundred things, whilst he listened in no assumed interest, but with a kindly smile on his handsome face, whilst those grey eyes of his approved the baby beauty of this small, delightful cousin, with her big velvet eyes, flushed cheeks, and dainty golden curls.

She was just a picture as she stood there, framed in the open panel which gave entrance to the secret stair that led downwards to gloomy depths and a small stone chamber, whose history was full of such thrills and excitement as Livy and her brothers delighted in.

"You'll come and see for yourself, Cousin?" asked Tony, as he paused, candle in hand, half-way down the steps, to look up at her. "'Tis a famous hiding-place, and it is not only said—but true—that no cries uttered here can reach to the outer world."

Gathering the soft satin of her skirts about her slim ankles, Olivia obeyed the invitation. Never before had she enjoyed herself so vastly, or found a comrade as quickly as she had done in this delightful new relative.

With darkening eyes she beheld the small, desolate chamber in which Tragedy's grim ghost still lingered, and shuddered at sight of the heavy door which locked as soon as closed, leaving the hider or victim within a close prisoner, whilst the door itself appeared when shut but part of the wall.

Then, in the midst of a spirited tale concerning some earlier Anthony Courtleigh, a voice was heard calling for Olivia, and up they had to climb from the realms of terror and romance to the prosaic world above. It was only then that Livy found how fast Cousin Tony had been holding her hand whilst he told his story.

It still wanted three days to Christmas, and Olivia, who had pictured those days spent in prim penance, found herself much mistaken.

Cousin Anthony was goodness itself to her, showing her every item and object of interest in the Park and without. Taking her for splendid walks through the snow, even—once—pretending to be Roger and indulging in a game of snowballing, which came to a premature end, since who should appear to interrupt it but Miss Cynthia Rallings, the masterful heiress who . . . who was going to wed with Cousin Tony and keep him out of mischief.

She certainly gave Livy the impression of being quite equal to the task. She was a big, handsome woman of twenty-five, loud-voiced, strenuous, dominant, who withered up poor little Olivia with one stony glare, and forthwith did her best to reduce Anthony to a proper state of humility by her veiled sarcasm about playing with children.

Later, Tony found his little cousin in tears, and proceeded to put himself very nearly in a temper—by way of consoling her,

and ending by stealing a kiss, which sent her, with burning cheeks and throbbing heart, helter-skelter to her room.

It . . . it was *odious* to remember that Aunt Agatha had bidden her not fall in love with Cousin Anthony, since . . . since he was to marry Mistress Cynthia; and . . . and still worse to perceive that he thought her so much a child that he had not scrupled to kiss her!

Olivia sat in the withdrawing-room that evening and discoursed for her elders on the harpsichord, whilst every time she glanced towards Cousin Anthony's serious face she wondered if he had bestowed so much as a second thought on the kiss which still seemed to tingle on her lips.

It was not till Aunt Agatha had got into bed that night, and Parkins had been dismissed, that she remembered leaving the drops, given her by her physician for a troublesome cough, in the smaller withdrawing-room.

As all the household were abed, there was no help for it but Livy must fetch the bottle.

Poor Olivia, palpitating over such an adventure, since she had a horror of ghosts at midnight hours, slipped on a blue wrapper and crept away like a small ghost herself along the passages, down the broad stairs, and across the hall.

Already a dozen terrors had seized her, sending her scuttling in a panic, only to recover, and tip-toe past her uncle and aunt's bedroom.

Alack! She would never unfasten the bolts on the door or—Olivia gave a little sigh of relief. Thanks, no doubt, to some careless servant, the door of the withdrawing-room stood wide, whilst a glimmer of moonlight creeping through the shutters would be enough to guide her to the spot where the drops had been left.

So great was the girl's haste, so intent was she in her purpose, that she had the tiny bottle clasped in her hand before she was aware that the door leading to the larger saloon was open, and not only so, but a broad splash of moonlight told of a shutter either taken down or opened.

Olivia came to a sudden halt, listening.

A voice—a man's voice—speaking in low but clear tones, reached her. Livy had ears like a hare, and she not only recognised the speaker as Cousin Anthony, but understood each word of the speech.

"To-morrow? To-morrow at three o'clock at the old Grange—and we ride north?"

Then an answering voice, strange to the listener—

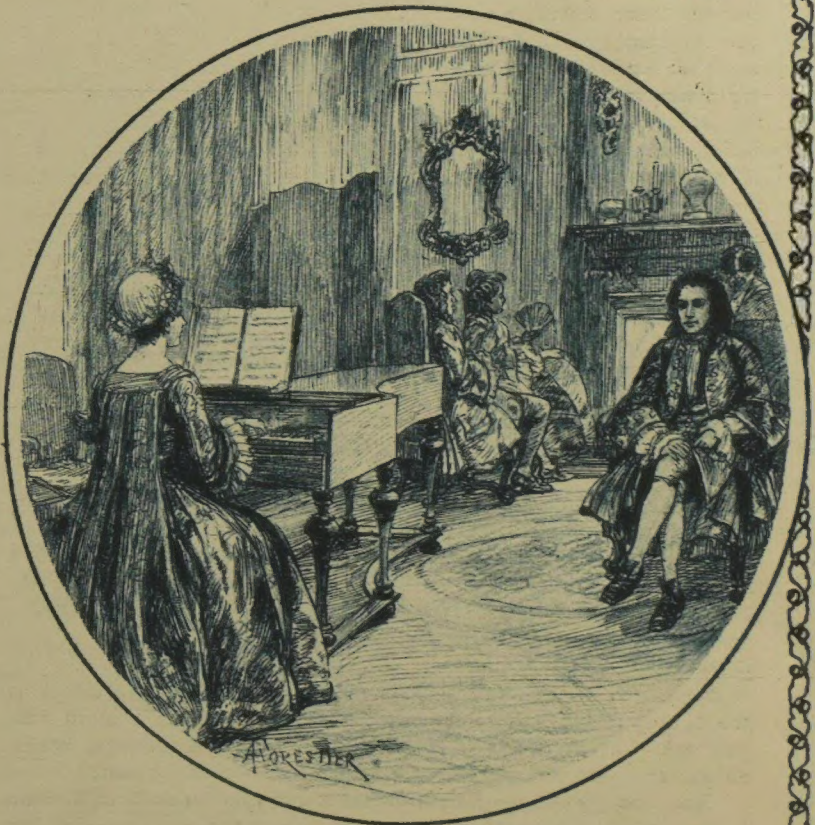
"Yes, with no more delay than the state of the roads and a meeting in town with other comrades make necessary. All is arranged. We meet the rest of our friends at Settle in Yorkshire. If things turn out as they promise, the Chevalier de St. George will be in England—or Scotland—before the New Year is many days old—and ere long on his father's throne at St. James's."

There was more enthusiasm in this speaker's tones than Livy had fancied to catch in Cousin Anthony's. In fact, when the latter spoke again, the little eavesdropper fancied she caught a certain reluctance in his promise not to fail his friends, which was answered by a somewhat curt warning that there could be neither waiting nor delay for laggards.

Then followed the *scrape . . . scrape* of a closing window and shutter, during which Olivia fled.

Aunt Agatha was inclined to rate at the long delay of the tiresome child. She had had a fit of coughing which could have been averted by the drops, and, to add to her indignation, Livy

[Continued on page 6.]



Olivia . . . discoursed for her elders on the harpsichord.



A Christmas Service in the Peninsular War.

Christmas has always asserted its rights, even in the midst of warfare. In recent years campaigners did their best to keep the seasonable tradition alive in the mud and discomfort of Flanders, and they were helped, as active service troops had never been before, by many organisations, which existed for the purpose of lightening the soldiers' lot. Very different was the state of things in the Crimean War, but even there scratch Christmas festivities achieved real heartiness, of which evidence remains in the pages of this journal. Of Peninsular War Christmases we possess fewer details, and certain 25ths of December saw the troops either hotly engaged or effecting toilsome movements in desperate weather. But it is well known that our hard-fighting army in Spain and Portugal were great hands at a festivity, at every possible opportunity, and that the usual ceremonial, including the statutory Church Service, was not altogether omitted, if occasion served. The religious organisation of the Army was less elaborate in those days, and Church services did not play a very prominent part in daily orders. But any celebration must have had a peculiar significance for troops far less closely in touch with home and home institutions than our modern warriors were, reminding them of English scenes and English ways amid the breaches of Iberian and Lusitanian fortresses.

FROM THE DRAWING BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.





The God of the Yule Month: Thor, Shut Out from Valhalla.

"Thor with the bent brow In red beard muttering low": the god of thunder unable to cross the bridge Bifröst like the Valkyries, lest he set it aflame.

Christmas customs embody many elements of Norse mythology, including the use of mistletoe. In "Myths of the Norsemen," from the Eddas and Sagas, by H. A. Guerber, we read: "One month of every year, the Yule month, or Thor's month, was considered sacred to Frey as well as to Thor, and began on the longest night of the year, which bore the name of Mother Night. This month was a time of feasting and rejoicing, for it heralded the return of the sun. The festival was called Yule (wheel) because the sun was supposed to resemble a wheel rapidly revolving across the sky. . . . The first Christian missionaries, perceiving the extreme popularity of this feast, thought it best to encourage drinking to the health of the Lord and his twelve apostles when they began to convert the Northern heathens. . . . Another Yuletide custom was the burning of a huge log. King Olaf transferred most of its observances to Christmas Day, thereby doing much to reconcile the ignorant people to their change of religion. . . . As he was god of thunder, Thor alone was never allowed to pass over the wonderful bridge Bifröst, lest he should set it aflame by the heat of his presence." In the lower part of Mr. Sime's fine drawing, Thor is seen brooding over this grievance, while above the nine Valkyries, Odin's battle-maidens, are riding across the bridge into Valhalla.—[FROM THE DRAWING BY S. H. SIME.]

showed no proper sense of her neglect and laziness, but scarcely replied to her aunt's reproaches, merely saying she had been as quick as possible.

But, through the long hours of the night, a weary while after Aunt Agatha's placid snores rolled in sonorous rhythm through the chamber, a small golden head tossed restlessly on the pillow, whilst wide blue eyes visioned a handsome, merry comrade being dragged away to prison—and death.

Prison—and death. Oh! It was too terrible—too terrible! Yet, had she not heard both her own father and Uncle Lionel say that rascally Jacobites deserved no less? And she was sure . . . sure . . . Tony did not *want* to be a Jacobite. Aunt Agatha had been right in saying he had got tangled in these foolish plots, and . . . and now, no doubt, he felt in honour bound to go on getting more tangled—and yet more, till the terrible web dragged him to Tower Hill.

One's evil visions do not become less as one pictures them over and over again during wakeful hours, and no wonder that poor Livy rose on that day of Christmas Eve wan, heavy-eyed, equally convinced that Cousin Tony would be riding to his death this day, and that she would never, never be happy again if King George cut his head off, since . . . since . . .

But Livy—remembering Mistress Cynthia—never got further than that—*since*.

It might have been imagination that Cousin Anthony seemed more grave and less inclined for jesting that day, nor did he reply with any enthusiasm when his mother told him that during the afternoon Mistress Cynthia Rallings would be in to help hang the house with Christmas decorations.

Olivia sat quiet as a little mouse in the big window-seat of the library trying to read, but she had not scanned a single sentence—she was thinking as only a desperate woman can think. For, at this crisis, the child Livy had been metamorphosed into a woman grown.

And now the colour rose pinkly to her cheeks as she slipped from her seat and went boldly forth in search of Cousin Tony.

Someone—God maybe, since she had been praying—had given her an idea, and, as there was no time for weighing pros and cons, she intended to act swiftly upon it, and leave possible consequences till later.

For . . . if she . . . did not act . . . Cousin Tony . . . might be losing his precious life on . . . Tower Hill like . . . Earls Derwentwater and Kenmare.

Anthony was in the hall, whistling a sporting refrain; he smiled at Olivia, but his lips were wry, and there was a queer look which might have been pain in his grey eyes.

"Well, little coz," said he, in make-believe gaiety, "and what can I do for you? You look almost woe-begone."

She flushed, rallying to play her part.

"'Deed then," she retorted, "I had no thought for it. I've been writing to Roger and Ned and . . . and am a trifle weary. But you have it in your power to pleasure me."

"And how?" he asked, gazing intently into the lovely, up-turned face, "I'd go far—if I'd time—to do that."

She laughed. "This is no further than your secret chamber," she replied, "I've a whim to see it again—and . . . and prove for myself how secret it can be. Will you favour me?"

He glanced at the clock. Yes, he had nearly an hour to spare, and, without guessing how that glance sealed a purpose, turned to lead the way towards the gallery where the entrance to the secret stair was found.

Olivia was breathless before she reached the tiny stone chamber whose history was so full of romance and tragedy.

"How drear," she shuddered, "lack-a-me! What vapours the place gives me! Yet I'll have a tale pat for Roger of what it feels like to be a prisoner. Will you stand yonder, coz, and blow out the light? I'll be by myself and picture a hundred terrors."

Without a hint to suspicion her intention her cousin laughingly obeyed, believing her to be indulging in some whim of imagination. A moment later a sharp click startled him.

"Livy!" he cried, and groped towards where she had stood. The place was empty, and, with outstretched hands, he came in contact with a fast-closed door which opened only on the outer side.

He was a prisoner!—a prisoner on whom honour bound the pledge to ride north in less than an hour.

At first he believed it to be but an ill-timed jest, and banged upon the door, shouting peremptorily to Olivia to open instantly or he should be very angry. Nor threats, nor entreaties, nor prayers, had any effect—and Tony was not likely to forget the family tradition that no sound penetrated from the stone chamber of Courtleigh Park.

But Olivia, leaving her captive to rage in impotent anger and perplexity as to the meaning of this unprecedented act, fled up the stair, closing the panel behind her with trembling fingers.

Then, finding herself alone here amongst the shadows of a winter's afternoon, she burst into tearless sobs. She had . . . had saved Tony, possibly from Tower Hill—and a traitor's death; but he . . . he would never forgive her—never. If he . . . had liked her before—as grey eyes had managed to convey—he would hate her now; and oh! at thought of meeting his anger her grief became almost uncontrollable.

Then another thought came to torment her. She not only robbed Tony of his liberty at a crucial moment, but had also stolen from him his honour.

This Jacobite plot into which he had been inveigled would be sure to fail, since her father had said the English people would never tolerate a Romanist King on the throne again; and just because it must fail Tony would never be able to forgive her, since his friends would always believe he had held back in cowardice and for expediency's sake from a forlorn hope.

Olivia had strong views about manly honour, inculcated by the brothers who were her comrades. She could imagine Ned's and Roger's scorn in thinking a man would wish his life spared at expense of honour and good faith.

There should . . . there *must* be none to believe such lies of Tony. *But the men waiting at the Old Grange would believe it.*

Olivia drew a deep breath. She was in a mood ripe for action. She could not endure to wait idly and unconcernedly till the hour when Tony might be freed. She must act.

This was the inspiration of a moment, to be seized upon in scarcely less time.

Up to her room stole Livy, donned cloak and hood and thick boots, and was out through a side postern unseen by any, ten minutes after a first resolve had been born.

"I'll go to the Old Grange and tell them the truth," thought she. "They can but kill me."

Just then death seemed easy compared with meeting Anthony's reproaches.

The men who waited in the empty hall of the Old Grange waxed impatient. Their horses were tethered in the copse without; it wanted but three minutes to the hour of departure, and all were met saving Tony Courtleigh, whom each secretly regarded as a somewhat lukewarm comrade in a cherished enterprise.

Whatever faults these luckless Stuarts possessed, they had the trick of inspiring a matchless love and enthusiasm in the breasts of their followers. So there were mutterings amongst those gathered in the ruined house which long ago had been termed haunted and so left to decay.

"We cannot wait after the hour," rapped out the leader impatiently, "or we shall end by being late for our own rendezvous. Besides, I have neither excuse nor place for laggards."

"Courtleigh promised to be here," retorted another of the company; "and I vow he is a man of honour and his word."

"Both seem to have failed him now," sneered a third. "I'm for the saddle, and the devil take—"



"Will you stand yonder, coz, and blow out the light? I'll be by myself and picture a hundred terrors."

The speaker was interrupted by the sound of a quick footfall without, and the door was pushed open to admit—as all supposed—Courtleigh himself.

One glance sufficed to disappoint this hope and to raise further alarm.

A small, cloaked figure stood in the doorway, with hood fallen back from a glowing face. But the roses brought to Olivia's cheeks by her hasty run through snow-clogged lanes faded as she saw the grim circle of faces before her. Sir Gresham Blount, the leader of the party, stepped forward. He spoke only one word—

"Betrayed!"

A thrill ran round the company. There was so ugly a sound in those two syllables that they forgot they were gazing at a lass out of the ordinary—pretty.

Olivia wilted and paled. She quite made up her mind she was going to die, and wondered—vaguely—whether Cousin Tony would think her death made up for her desperate action.

"This is Courtleigh's doing," she heard one man say aloud. "I saw the lass with him yesterday. No doubt we shall have the soldiers following. Yet—I could not have—"

This speech assisted Livy to the finding of her voice. Once more the colour burned in her cheeks, her eyes sparkled. She forgot . . . she was going to die.

"Oh, how can you believe it?" she cried, her voice rising in shrill accusation. "You know he could never, never, never be a traitor."

Sir Gresham's laugh was grim.

"Then why, Madam," he asked cuttingly, "are you here in his place?"

Olivia regarded him wide-eyed. It was the moment of confession, and she made it with some dramatic sense and a spirit which she herself could hardly recognise.

"I heard him say he would be here," she replied. "I . . . I was in the next room, where I had come to fetch Aunt Agatha's drops. There . . . was another man—I did not see him, but I heard all . . . about this meeting and your going north to see . . . the Pretender. I . . . I knew if Cousin Tony went he would become a . . . a traitor and lose . . . his head, perhaps, at Tower Hill. So . . . I locked him in the secret chamber . . . where none can hear his cries, because . . . because the man . . . the other man . . . said they would not wait for him. And he will be very . . . very angry when I set him free. . . . He will never forgive me for . . . for saving him."

So surprising was the tale that all who heard it stood dumb. Yet the curious part was that none could disbelieve the speaker, amazing though her story was. Did they—these lovers of an exiled Prince, these enthusiasts in a hopeless cause—know enough of another sort of love to read the riddle of the tale?

Yet Sir Gresham was not wholly satisfied.

"If this be true," quoth he sceptically, "and you the true-blue Whig your sentiments show you, for what purpose are you here? Why have you not sent the soldiers in your place?"

Olivia's eyes dilated in surprise as she looked into the stern, grizzled face of the Jacobite leader.

"Nay," she faltered, "I . . . I came because I know a man's honour is dearer to him than his life, and that in truth Cousin Tony could never, never forgive me did he think you rode north believing him a traitor to his cause. For the rest, Sir, I too have my honour—and could not betray those whose secret I learned in such a manner."

The child spoke so seriously, and with such quaint dignity, that not a man from Sir Gresham downwards but was ashamed of his suspicions.

"So," murmured the leader, "then it was to save your lover's honour you came, Madam?"

The scarlet flush brought tears to Olivia's eyes.

"Oh, no," she cried in maiden shame, "he . . . he is not my lover. He . . . is to wed with Mistress Cynthia Rallings, who . . . Aunt Agatha says . . . will keep him out of mischief. I am only—his cousin."

Sir Gresham took her cold little hand, bowing over it.

"Madam," he replied, "pardon me saying that Tony Courtleigh would be a fool did he look elsewhere than to his little cousin to be kept out of mischief. For the rest, I think I prove my admiration for your spirit by claiming no vow of secrecy from you. Soon all England will know why I and my friends ride north, but how we shall ride south is a different matter and in the hands of Heaven. I think we are strangers to you—let us meet as strangers, I pray, should King George remain on an English throne. For the rest, if it is otherwise ordained and our hopes are realised, King James shall know why a certain little Whig should win his favour, since there is a law to which all men and women owe devoir. The law—of love."

He raised his dark eyes to her flushing, paling face, and Livy—feeling that she would the earth could open and swallow her up—

knew he had guessed her secret—the secret she had only known herself a few short hours before.

So those men who had vowed to set a Stuart on the English throne went forth, leaving the girl who had avowed herself true-blue Whig alone and unmolested in the house to which she had come to meet her death.

She had offered no brief for her good faith—but it was stamped on her brow. They knew that this young maid, being what she was, could not play the traitor to any cause having once given her word. Was it that Ned and Roger had impressed their lesson of honour well—or had another been her silent teacher?

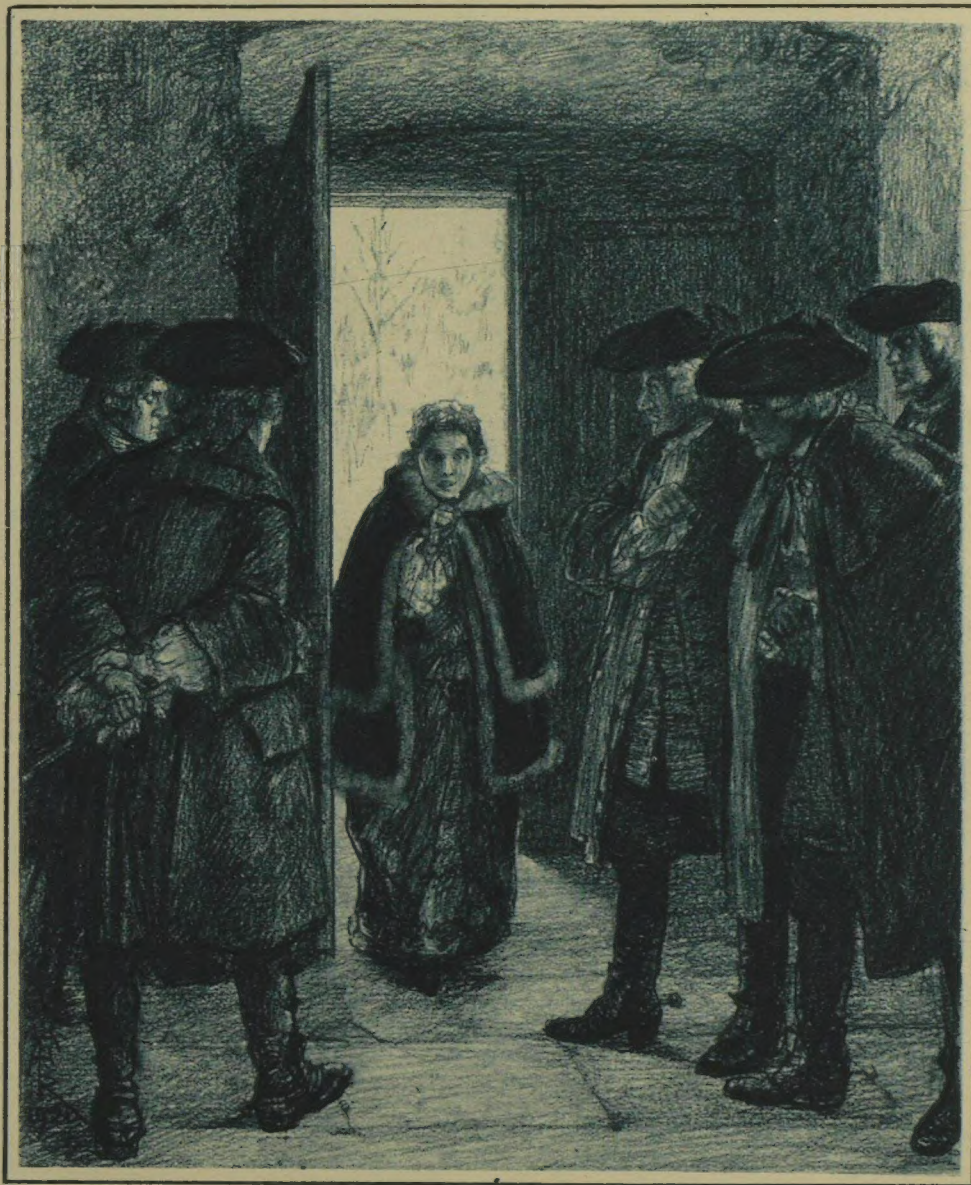
Alas! poor Livy. Though the men who mounted their horses in yonder copse might speak of her smilingly as a heroine, she felt none of the exaltation of such a part. Alone, in the rat-haunted old ruin, she crouched sobbing—because now she would have to be returning to—an inexorable judge. . . .

Mistress Cynthia Rallings was in the most vixenish of tempers when she arrived by special invitation to help wreath the holly-berries round the old hall at Courtleigh Park, according to the time-honoured custom of Christmas Eve, and found no sign of the handsome gallant who she hoped was the suitor for her hand. Where was Tony? Sir Lionel asked the question frowningly of every one except the white-cheeked, red-eyed little niece who came creeping down—presumably from her room—during the process of the decorations, whilst frost-nipped fingers bungled so foolishly at their task that Mistress Cynthia sniffed knowingly, guessing at some unnamed tryst between the cousins out in the winter's gloaming. Fortunately for Livy, however, none of the elders—least of all Sir Lionel—shared Mistress Rallings' suspicions, and Olivia remained dumb concerning the prisoner in the secret chamber.

But her thoughts were with him all the time, her tender heart torn as she pictured Cousin Tony's wrath when the hour for liberation dawned.

Poor child, she was cold with terror and dismay as she crept, wan as a ghost, along the gallery to the grim task of all. A task far more terrible than facing murderous Jacobites in a haunted ruin.

She had heard Sir Lionel say to his wife as she glided by that, though Tony was to blame for absenting himself on Christmas—



A small, cloaked figure stood in the doorway, with hood fallen back from a glowing face.

Eve, there had been no need for Mistress Cynthia to show such temper, and he for one would be sorry to be her husband. A remark which vaguely pleased the little culprit who was the cause of all the pother.

Oh! If only she might run away home and leave another to the dreadful task of facing Cousin Anthony.

But though Olivia was little more than a child, she did not lack courage, and so it was that presently a man, leaning huddled against the wall in a black prison, heard a door-catch click, and—in the yellow light of a candle—beheld the slender figure of the lass who had dared to thwart him in a sworn enterprise.

Yet, if he expected to find triumph in the small face which showed so white under its high cap, he was mistaken, and even his very just wrath melted at the sight of such piteous fear.

But Livy did not wait to give explanations as she fled back up the stone stair—afraid, because of the stern reproach which . . . was worse than anger in grey eyes.

It was Christmas morning. A Christmas of bright sunshine, which fell on the glittering pall of snow and made the drab old world a dainty fairy-land, in which little Olivia Mallinton played no poor part of queen.

Yet was she a queen without kingdom or subjects as she stood there—alone, too sad at heart to hear the joy bells, which through the long ages have echoed an angelic song.

She had gone supperless to bed last night, making excuse of headache to escape curious enquiries. And this morning, after screwing up all her courage to appear at breakfast, she was met with the dismaying news that Tony had left home at so early an hour that none had been astir to hear the reason for his going.

Yet, at the table, there had been the evidence of something amiss. Sir Lionel sat scowling and glum in his carved chair at the head of the board; Aunt Anne was tearful behind the urn; whilst Aunt Agatha flung out hints of young fools and their folly, hot-heads, and the wily spiders that caught unwary flies, till Livy could have screamed in her apprehension.

Now, as she stood alone under snow-laden trees in the great avenue, her heart was full to bursting with trouble. Was it possible this could be Christmas morning? Christmas, the happiest, merriest season of the year! But she had—strangely enough—scarce a thought to bestow on Roger and Ned, or a regret that she was not at home to share their gammocks. All her mind was filled with forebodings that she had failed. Failed to save Tony from Tower Hill, whilst earning his everlasting reproach.

The jingle of a bridle and sound of approaching horse-hoofs roused her, and scarce was her reverie broken than a man had swung himself out from his saddle, and, with bridle neatly slipped through his arm, was by her side.

Olivia gave one cry, and then stood still as if frozen, whilst the colour first faded then flooded in her cheeks.

"Cousin . . . Tony," she faltered, for she *had* to speak, else she must have broken down into tears provoked by



Frost-nipped fingers bungled so foolishly at their task that Mistress Cynthia sniffed knowingly.

the curious emotions thrilling her at sight of those grey eyes that were looking down . . . down into her heart, with neither anger nor reproach in their gaze.

"I met Jack Trevennen on the road to London," said Anthony, without greeting or preamble, "'twas he you heard speaking with me at the window." The plot to win the throne for the Chevalier is quashed before ripening. Those who rode from the Old Grange yesterday are fleeing back for their lives; two are already prisoners, since a meeting held in town ere their ride north was broken in on by King George's soldiers—spy led. I should have been in prison or on

my way to France at best had I been in that company. Jack Trevennen met me on my road. He had time to tell his tale. He told me, too, how an heroic lass had ventured alone amongst desperate conspirators because she knew I held my plighted word higher than life or convictions. I have been asking myself what words I can use in . . . thanking . . . that young maid who saved—the life and honour of an ingrate. Canst help me—little coz?"

Then the tears came. Olivia could not help them. She was not a great heroine after all—but only a child made strong by love. And so tears were all the answer she could give.

But perhaps that answer was the most eloquent of all—and the one that made Tony's part the easiest, for what else could he do but gather the sobbing child in his arms—and comfort her in the way common to all lovers, and so needing no tuition?

"And will your father be *very* angry?" whispered Olivia, raising an April face from Tony's shoulder, "because . . . because . . . my mother promised I should not fall in love with you since . . . since you . . . you were to wed Mistress Rallings."

Cousin Tony's laugh was ringing with its whole-hearted amusement—for what man is not gay when he has his heart's desire in his arms?

"And why, Madam," he asked, tilting a rounded chin to the correct level for his lips to seek the quivering red ones so near them, "should I be condemned for my sins to wed Mistress Rallings?"

Her eyes were like stars, so full were they of happiness—and a latent roguery which led to a demure drooping of lashes.

"An it please you, cousin," whispered Livy, "'twas said that lady alone could keep you out of mischief."

"The more need," he retorted, kissing her unabashed, "to convince the speakers of such heresy of their mistake. Come, little one, without delay, and I will introduce to my honoured parents the virago who locked her future lord up in a prison cell to keep him safely, and further bound him as her slave when, at long last, she freed him. What record can the world give of more complete subjugation? I warrant none will deny your right to hold your captive—as your own for all time."

It proved that even Sir Lionel himself could not deny the justice of this argument.

And Christmas bells, jangling merrily over a snow-bound world, found echo in the hearts of the two who had found in so strange a bye-way the Christmas gift—of love.

[THE END.]



"And why, Madam," he asked, tilting a rounded chin to the correct level for his lips to seek the quivering red ones so near them, "should I be condemned for my sins to wed Mistress Rallings?"



A CHRISTMAS DAY CASUALTY.

FROM THE PAINTING BY LAWSON WOOD.



FROM THE PAINTING BY FRANK DADD, R.I.

A CAST SHOE.

Lucky to find a farrier here,
 Half a mile more, she'd a' gone dead lame.
 Truth, you're right, an' it's ten mile clear
 On to the next, old what's-his-name ;
 (Better the job to me than him)
 What's your news - are ye lately come
 Back from the wars ? We're out o' the swim,
 Little we hear o' the fife and drum.

Back about August, folks did say
 Something was doing across the seas,
 We fought some fellows that ran away ;
 Where was it ? Hold ye, if ye please,
 I'll mind it soon, if ye give me time :
 Minden ? Ay, that was the name they gave,
 An' a tale o' roses they pitched, but I'm
 Danged if that last bit ain't a shave.

No ? D'ye say it's Gospel true ?
 How d'ye know ? What ! Bless my heart !
 You sittin' there an' smokin', you
 Was one o' the boys that did their part

An' plucked the roses down Minden way.
 Well, that was the Foot, to tell you straight ;
 For Minden wasn't a cavalry day.
 We thought they'd give us a chance, t'nough late,

But Sackville refused to put us in
 Right at the end : well meant, no doubt,
 But Lard ! who would ask to save his skin,
 When a charge would a' turned retreat to rout ?
 All is, our Foot was a sight, egad,
 A single line that broke clean through
 Three lines of enemy horse that had
 A bellyful an' a beating too.

And all in the space of an hour at that !
 You think I'm tellin' the tale, my friend,
 But I never do that to a man, that's flat,
 Though I have to a girl, at times, no end ;
 Still, that's the way o' the world, John Smith,
 You've done 't' yourself, if your eye speaks true—
 Finished ? Gadzooks you're a lad o' pith !
 An' what may King George be owin' you ?—L. N.



The Lady Ste. Bride.

Listen in the fire-light glow
To a tale of long ago;
While the wine-cup goes its way
Bark a tale of yesterday,
Sweet as is a river's song
When the sun shines fierce and strong

Sweet as tune of little bird
All alone in forest heard.
List ye, sitting by my side
At this merry Christmastide
To the tale of Lady Bride.

Bride was a fair maiden, never fairer in all the land. For she lived at the North—so said he that told me this story—and I saw it in a book also that had pictures.

It was a strange, bare land, and Bride lived nigh to the sea-shore in a castle alone with her mother. For the Lord of the Castle was long since dead. Yea, he died when the little maiden was but a new-born babe.

And when he was dying the mother said to him, "What shall I call her?" And he said, "She is as fair as thou." But the Lady Marguerite said, "Nay, but far fairer." He said, "When thou went with me on the day when we were wedded there was none fairer than thou, nor could have been in all the world." And she said, "I will call her Bride."

And he said, "Even so it is, she is called Bride." For there was no christening then, for Christ Jesus our Lord was not yet born. But it was a sad country, full of all wickedness and wrong-doing. For they killed children to their gods, and their gods found pleasure therein. And a woman might say naught against it, for they treated women wickedly even as they listed, and if they listed ill, it was ill, and if well, well.

Even in such manner did Bride grow up in the Castle Bordenere. (That meaneth edge of the mere, namely, the sea.) For there were faithful men that guarded her, and the folk of that place were not evil at heart. And there was one, Sir Freer, that was as right a lad as ever you knew, save that he wot not of Christ and Christ's ways.

I ween that Bride was lonely in Castle Bordenere. She played all day with pieces of wood and stones, and she bathed them and kissed them, and set them a-bed, and sung lullaby even as if they were little ones out of her own white self.

Little baby, lullaby;
Bark the chanting of the sea,
And the sounding of the foam,
Art not glad to be at home,

Lying there so close to me,
Breathing there so quietly?
Little baby, lullaby;
Lulla, baby, lullaby.

And as she grew older, even to be a maiden, and the sticks and stones gave her no more pleasure, then her eyes grew sad, and anon and anon went she down to the sea-shore when the sun shone and listened to the crooning of the waves, quiet and slow, as they bowed in love to the land, and watched the ripple children run back after them.

And sometimes she sang.

And one day Lord Freer rode past. And so again, often on a day when the sun shone. Yea, and also when it shone not, but there was mist and rain. For there was yet a hope in his heart that Bride would be there.

On a day Bride went down to the sea-shore. And she came to a pool blue as the sky and cool as the wind. And she knecled beside it and plunged her arm deep into the water. And the little minney fishes came around it and thrust their faces against the white fingers as it were saying, "Is there naught within there for us?"

And as she knelt there the Lord Freer came past, very fair in the sunlight. And he lighted from his horse. And he said, "Surely thou hast lost a ring in the pool that thou plungest thine arm so deep." She saith, "Nay." But he thrust in his arm. And he met her fingers beneath the clear water. And he saith, "Even so shall I keep what I have found." And he said, "Bride, wilt 'ou be Lady of my Castle and wife to me?"

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So was Bride wedded to the Lord of the Castle. And on a time there came to her a very fair child, a little boy child, white as her own fair bosom, and he lay there a-crowling all day long. And Bride said, "Now is my joy complete."

Yet was it but the beginning of sorrow. For there fell on the land a dreadful pestilence, never so dreadful was known. And they prayed to their gods, but it availed naught. And they sacrificed goats and cows. But it did not avail. And they said, "The gods are hungry, they must have men." And lo! so it was that they murdered poor little children. And they said, "It availeth not. What more can we do?"

And as the Lord of the Castle sat in the evening in full winter, sore cast down and very sad, there came a crying at the gate, and the watchman saith, "Who is it?" They said, "It is all of us." He saith, "Who are chief?" And there came forward the heads of the village and the priest. And they went into the hall. And the Lord saith, "Yet more death?" They say, "Yet more death everywhere. The gods will not be appeased save with the greatest. For look you how their eyes gaze down on us." And through the window lo! a star, bright as the moon, that shone and moved and moved and shone.

He saith, "What would you?"

They say, "The greatest only will suffice."

He saith, "What, my child also?"

And they tore the little one away from her. And the Lord sat there with his head in his arms, and he said, "What are these gods that can be so cruel?"

And Lady Bride fled to her chamber that looked out over the sea. And she lay on her bed and knew nothing.

And at last, in the hall, the Lord started up and laid his hand to his sword and said, "Yea, even the greatest. And the father is more than the son, yet by the wrath of man shall I die, rather than my son perish by the greed of these gods."

But aloft in her chamber lay Lady Bride. And the sea was peaceful as the breast of a child. And the star shone. And brighter it shone, even as the star of a magic sleep, and the beams of the star came in at the window and glimmered upon her face, and a singing was mingled with the singing of the waves, even as the song of many angels. And there came two angels and took her up and carried her away. And over the sea the light of their wings grew fainter, far over the edge of the sky to where little Christ Jesus was born that night. And Bride nursed Mother Mary and the Little One in the night of pain.

And anon, as morning dawned through the chinks and the lattices, there stood the Lord of the Castle with his sword in his hand stained with blood and his child lying asleep on his shield. And he cried to the men in the doorway and the courtyard that cringed before him, "No gods are they that can be so cruel."

And as he cried there came from above a singing, for it was the first Christmas song of her who had nursed Child Jesus.

And he said, "Come now, let us lay this at her feet. For I ween she knoweth of gods for us that will save us. For our hearts are hard and who shall guide us to the light save she who brought us thence into the world?"

Little Jesu, unto Thee
Sing we lulla, lullabie.
Unto Baby Jesu we
Sing a lulla, lullabie.
Softly sleep, and sweetly dream,
Lying in the starlight beam.
Dream of heaven that was thy home,
Unto us earth-children come;
Slowly, softly come thy breath,
Think not of the cross and death:

We shall moan and we shall weep,
Baby Jesu, softly sleep;
And anon the time will be,
Thou shalt bring our hearts to thee,
Dying on the cross to make
Earth more happy for our sake.
But to-night we sing to thee,
Baby Jesu, lullabie,
Lulla, baby, lullabie,
Lullabie.



Marie of Arteans.

This is of Jacques who made stone images; and the story is true, because I heard it myself.

Mother Mary, up on high,
Standing white against the sky,
Holding little Jesu, blest
Baby child, against thy breast—
We be sinful men, but thou

Knowest well our hearts, I trow.
Mother Mary, standing high
On the church-top next the sky,
Bid one prayer to heaven go
For me as I pass below.

Now they were building a church in the village of Arteans. It was the old Abbot of the Abbey that first began to build. Then soldiers came and destroyed the Abbey when of the church there was nought more than the walls and the roof, all plain and bare. And so the years went by, and they said, "It will be finished some day, when the Abbey is made again." And so they passed it by. Only the children played in and out of the porch, and the old men looked at it and nodded in the sunshine.

Then so it was that there came monks again to the Abbey at last. And they had money in plenty, and they said, "All this shall be set right at last." And they sent abroad for workers. But there came few of the skill to do the images and the carving. Many there were to work, but not one to plan and make beautiful, and the monks knew not what to do.

At last there went the Abbot through the market-place one day, and he beheld an image of an old woman on a stall. It was made of wood, very wonderful. For it had wrinkles and lines and folds and crows'-feet all over the little dirty wizened face, and she sat over a great cauldron or pot and made therein a mixture I know not what, so wicked and hideous she looked. And the Abbot said, "Our gargoyles! our gargoyles! Lo! now, who made this wonderful image?"

And the man at the stall said, "There is a lad with a little wife round as a cherry, and both are poor as two birds on a bare winter tree. They live many, many days' journey from here. Scarce go I there once in a twelvemonth. When I go, he bringeth me such things, but I get little money for them. For of what use be these little images, save to set on a shelf?"

The Abbot said, "I will send straightway."

So there came a messagere to Jacques the carver's house. And he found him with his little wife that was round as a cherry. They were eating a supper of bread and of cheese made of milk.

The messagere saith, "My lord the Abbot of Arteans saith, 'Come, carve us gargoyles on his church, and he will give thee five livres for each month.'"

Jacques saith, "What is an Abbot, and where is Arteans? And what is a gargoyle? And who talketh of livres? I have not so much as a sou. I do not know what a livre is."

He saith, "My lord the Abbot of Arteans—that is from here many days'—aye, and weeks' journey, My lord saith, 'Come, carve us gargoyles'—that is, carving on a church of strange monsters."

"Al, al," saith Jacques. "Can I not carve strange monsters! Never saw you such! Look you here."

"O, O, Jacques," saith the little wife round as a cherry, "would that he would take them and carry them away, for they be so ugly they look at me in my sleep."

The messagere saith, "He will give thee five livres—that is, gold pieces, worth many sous, for every month, so that thou do good gargoyles."

Jacques saith, "How shall I not go! Lo! straightway I will up behind thee on thy horse."

"O, O," saith the little wife round as a cherry, "O, O, and he thinketh not of me!"

So Jacques came many days' journey to the Church of Arteans, and did gargoyles, marvellous hideous. And he worked day and he worked night, and he never thought, never a whit, of the little wife round as a cherry. But he made his images so ugly as never was stone before.

Autumn faded into winter, and yet the work went on. And the Abbot said—

"Never so was stone before:
Glaring eyes and open jaw,
Double row of arrow teeth,
Monstrous tongue curled underneath.

Every devil, great and small,
Row on row, till there are all—
All save one, for still a place
Waiteth yet for Satan's face."

[Continued overleaf.]



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Very marvellous work it was.

So Jacques worked every day, late summer, and golden autumn, and the bleak of winter. At day's dawning, and at midday bustle, and at evening's quiet close ever came the click, click, of his hammer. Yea, and often on the wooden steeple of a night shone the beam of his lantern, and over the silent market-place came the click, click, click, as he fashioned new heads strange and wonderful.

Autumn faded into winter, and yet the work went on. And the Abbot said, "Of a very truth he is a marvellous craftsman; scarce over half a year and Christmas coming nigh and he has been working there. And before Christmas is long past will all be finished."

And the hammer went on click, click, click.

Then came in God's Christmas Day
When the folk go all to pray
And "Blessed Season" to thee say;
And at night make feast and song,
Laugh and jest the eve along.

Merry day with joy and game
Is the day when Jesus came—
Jesus, baby meek and low,
Into this our land of woe.

So all the folk came to the church, and afterward went to their homes, each one to make merry. And short afternoon faded into eve and evening to twilight. But still sounded the click, click, click of Jacques' hammer high up on the steeple.

And the old cronies by the fireside shook their heads and said, "Good will not come of it, for it is sin to work on a Christmas Day, and more sin on Christmas night, when the ghosts walk through the country-side and make it their own for a brief while."

But Jacques, high up on his steeple, lighted his lantern and plied his chisel, click, click, click; and it was Satan himself's head he was making. Far below the little lights in the cottages came out, and the faint sound of voices rose up to him. And anon the lights faded, and there were only the stars and the sky and silence and the lantern light. And he laughed aloud, "Lo! I never made anything so hideous. Well fit is it for Prince Satan himself. Lo! look at the lolling tongue and the gap teeth."

Then a voice by his side, "Is it so, indeed?" And it was one even so, with lolling tongue and gap teeth and fire—I cannot tell how dreadful.

And the dreadful one said, "A very fair image, in truth; a very fair jest—

Get thee down
And break thy crown.
Who doth Satan's image make
Perishes for Satan's sake.

From the steeple tumbling go
Fall upon the ground below!
Down, down, and break thy crown
On the ground below!"

And he gave him a push as it were of a team of oxen. And Jacques said, "Out, alas! here ends it." And lo! as he tripped there came into his mind thought of the little wife round as a cherry, and he thought, "Lo! all these months have I never given mind to her, and what shall she do now?"

And even as he thought it there came a gentle hand upon his neck, and he stood up again on the steeple safe and sound. And he crossed himself and said, "Mary Mother, keep me from the devil." For lo! before him it was Mother Mary herself, even she that had saved him. And he said, "Blessed one, was it thou?" She said, "Even I; for hadst thou not thought that one thought of my little one, thy wife round as a cherry, there hadst thou been on the ground below. For man's life was not made to be lived in loneliness, nor man's hands fashioned to make ugliness. Go thou to her that waits thee and needs thee, even as does every woman when her Christmas cometh."

And lo! by the moonlight he looked on the image that he had been making, but it was not Satan at all. But the little round face of a mother, sweet and pale in the moonlight, and full of longing, even as Mother Mary herself. And in the image's arms was a baby, lying without strength, just come into the world.

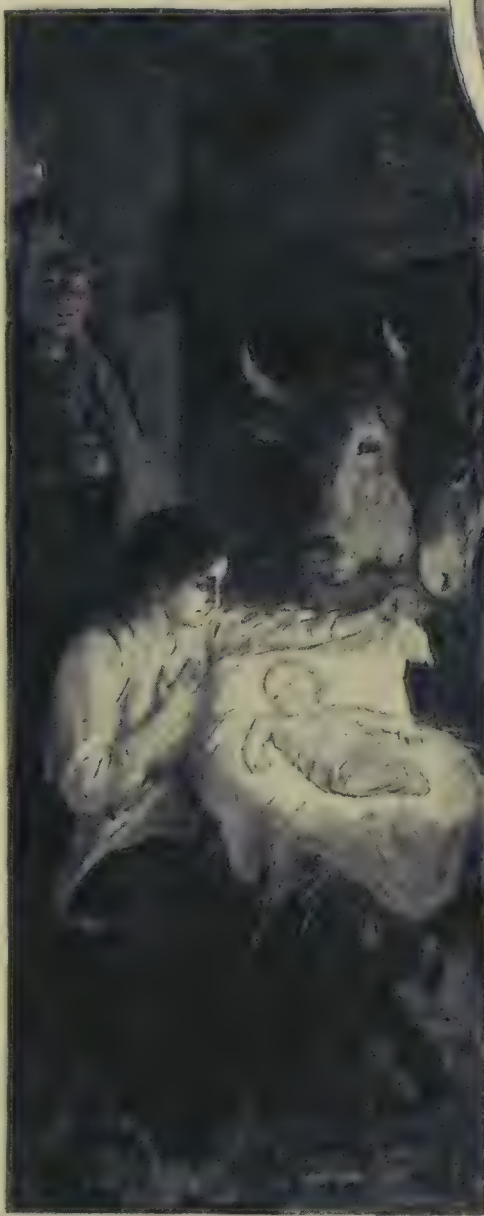
And he went to his wife.

And the image is called Marie of Arteans even now, and the story is true and even so, for I heard it myself.

Mother Mary up on high,
Standing white against the sky,
Holding little Jesu, blest
Baby child, against the breast.
We be sinful men, but thou

Knowest well our hearts, I trow.
Mother Mary, standing high
On the church-top next the sky,
Bid one prayer to heaven go
For me as I pass below.





CHRISTMAS PICTURES IN THE FIRE.

When Christmas gloaming
Gathers, children of earth
Draw to the hearth,
Let fancy roaming
Play the old game,
Pictures in flame.

Here, a shepherd's cot
With casement lighted
Bids the benighted
Traveller bless his lot,
Serves him for guide
To his ingle-side.

And see the shepherd there
With lantern go
Over the snow
Folding his flock, his care.
Ah! he has vanished away.
Fire fancies never stay.

Follows another
Image of Christmas lore:
Shepherds, star-led, adore
Christ-child and Mother,
And in the heart of fire
Shines the Celestial Choir.



FROM COACH TO CAR—BUT CHRISTMAS CHEER REMAINS UNCHANGED.



DOES the flight of year on year
Steal the charm from Christmas cheer?
Has the legend any truth
For the sceptic ear of youth?
Do our children, worldly wise,
Look on Yule with doubtful eyes,
Counting all its ancient glory
Borrowed plumes from Dickens' story?

Hardly; for the gilded fable
Holds essential truths and stable.
Something in the festal season
Rooted stands in human reason.
Every 25th December

Summons mortals to remember
Certain cheerful celebrations
Common to the Christian nations.

Christmas journeys must be taken.
Though we be no longer shaken
From our coach by foot-pads naughty,
There's excitement still for haughty

Motorists, whose rapid hobby
Steal the charm from Christmas cheer?
Finds disfavour with the Bobby.
Turpin swung as high as Haman,
Now the Law has turned highwaymen.

Household hearths, at Yule's returning,
Find, of sorts, the Yule-log burning.
Be it but the gas-lit grate or
Soft electric radiator

Which the man who sells us bring
Carted home, not we, perspiring,
As did grand-dad, when in salad
Days he practised Herrick's ballad.

Outwardly, we're more refined
Than our forbears, when they dined.
Their manners loud and hearty
Of the jolly family party
Halling with delighted babel
Every dish that came to table.
Heated rooms and hot potatoes
Reinforced their delectations.



Then, replete with rich plum-duff,
Up they got for blind-man's buff.
Still, one loves to think, the rule
When the children keep their Yule.
Christmas, in my fond belief,
Is the children's day-in-chief;
But for them and all they make it,
Ancient honour might forsake it.

Children of a larger size,
Be it noted, don't despise
Those ordained, essential things
Which the annual orgy brings.
Where's the man too old to know
How to use the mistletoe?
Though one must not kiss and tell,
Girls, it's rumoured, know as well.

Pledge we then the ancient laws:
Holly berries, Santa Claus,
Snow, if thoughtful Clerks of Weather
Choose to make it fall together

With the maddest, merriest feast
Marked with Rubric by the priest.
May Jack Frost, too, stand in waiting
With a Christmas gift of skating.

Though the noisy family rout
Has to some extent "gone out,"
Christmas dinner holds its own
In a more fastidious tone.
Two by two we toast the Day,
Four by four sit down to play;
Cooler, neater, less gregarious
We've become, and less hilarious.

In its essence, Christmas knows
Little change, though outward shows
Alter. For the worse or better?
Who'll determine to the letter?
But you'll note one steadfast thing
Whereupon no change you'll bring;
Yet you can't avoid, you'll say,
Finding change on Boxing Day.





"CINDERELLA."

DRAWN BY NOEL FLOWER.



"THE BABES IN THE WOOD."

DRAWN BY NOEL FLOWER.



CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE DAYS OF THE CRINOLINE.



THE CHRISTMAS MORNING RECEPTION.

Fair Ladies of Yesteryear.



"La royne Blanche comme ung lys,
Qui chantoit à voix de seraine,
Berthe au grand pied, Beatrix,
Allys,
Haremburges, qui tint le Mayne,
Et Jehanne, la bonne Lorraine,
Qu'Anglois bruslerent à Rouen:
Ou sont-ils, Vierge souveraine?...
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!"
—VILTON.

1.—BY JOHANN ZOFFANY (1733-1810).
"GEORGE, 3RD EARL COWPER,
COUNTESS COWPER, MR. AND MRS.
GORE, AND THE TWO MISSES GORE."

By Courtesy of Lady Desborough.

THERE are collectors of glass who confine themselves to Waterford, and of books who buy nothing printed after Anno Domini 1500; the pulses of some beat faster at the sight, if not the sound, of derelict grandfather clocks; with others the jars of China are a lifelong devotion. Sexless passions, these! More gallant is the buyer of pictures and prints, for whom a Reynolds lady is worth at least thrice as much as a Reynolds man. Put husband and wife to auction at Christie's, a perfect match in size, and framed in complete harmony of gilding and moulding—with what result? There is no equality of the sexes at the great assize of the hammer. The preference for the fairer sitter has in cases



2.—BY GEORGE ROMNEY (1734-1802):
"MISS CATHERINE CHOLMELEY."
By Courtesy of the late Sir M. Cholmeley, Bt

innumerable meant divorce, with heavy damages for the lady, who goes to a wealthy lover, and a mere trifle for the husband, who finds a hermitage with a humble and diffident admirer.

To the same gallant preference we owed a series of exhibitions, extending over several years, at the Grafton Galleries, at one of which series all the pictures on these pages were shown. Children, too, were eligible for exhibition, and for these pages, because the child not seldom goes hand-in-hand with its mamma, or, if not hand in hand, may be observed at her knee, or on her lap, or perched at her sloping shoulders. A small child has always been considered an ornament of the sex. A mother who still feels young

[Continued overleaf.]

3.—BY JOHN HOPPNER (1759-1810):
"MISS ELIZABETH JEMIMA BLAKE."
By Courtesy of Sir William H. Bennett



4.—BY VIGÉE LE BRUN (1755-1842):
"PORTRAIT OF HERSELF"
By Courtesy of Otto C. H. Gutkunst, Esq



Continued.]

enough to be taken for beautiful is never shy to advertise the tender years of her brood. A yearling or a two-year-old confirms her feeling that she has not yet relinquished her own youthfulness, but with her children in the later 'teens she may begin to grow suspicious of the mirror and wary of the portrait-painters. However that may be, we note that when she is painted with her family, the family is usually in an elementary stage. How often were Romney and Gainsborough and Reynolds called into a family circle of three, perhaps to bear their share in baby-talk, and satisfy with pretty speeches the enthusiasm of unjaded parents! How seldom were they introduced into the extended circle of eight or ten or twelve! For them England was an England of small families. Two charming examples, however, are given here of slightly elder children—one by Reynolds, of Lady Amabel and Lady Mary Jemima Grey, from the admirable Lucas collection; the other

[Continued below.]

BY ANTHONY VAN DYCK (1599-1641): "THE MARCHESA BALBI."

By Courtesy of Col. Sir G. L. Holford.

have but to go to Horace Walpole to be reminded that the Society graced by Zoffany's sitters was not nearly so strait-laced as his formal brush would have us believe. If it had no jazz, it had its sufficient share of other indecorums. In another of these pictures, "The Introduction," by Terburg, a cavalier does homage to ringlets and a pretty complexion. He is here admitted because he is a suppliant. The lady remains for us the centre of attraction, as she was for Terburg, no less than for the cavalier. Like so many of the damsels of the Old Master portraits, she is heavily and abundantly gowned. Look, too, at Van Dyck's Marchesa Balbi, in her green velvet robe and embroideries, material enough to robe ten of the maidens who have since beheld her on her wall at Dorchester House, whither she came from a Genoese palace. Look, too, at Velasquez' Isabella of Bourbon: is she a reproach to the new line? Or does the new line



BY GERARD TERBURG (1617-1681): "THE INTRODUCTION."

By Courtesy of the Hon. Mrs. Ronald Greville.



BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS (1723-1792): "LADY AMABEL AND LADY MARY JEMIMA GREY."

By Courtesy of the late Lord Lucas.

Gainsborough's portraits of his daughters, with expressions not unlike our own Lady Diana's—but on neither canvas is the mother visible.

Men, too, make an accidental appearance in this collection. They are helping the ladies to make music in Zoffany's genteel group of Lord and Lady Cowper and the Gores. The finished style of the picture suggests the finish of the whole period. Discords on that harpsichord are unthinkable. It makes us blush to recall the unmannerly noises we now produce in our Futuristic drawing-rooms—and for those drawing-rooms themselves, decorated by Roger Fry, we turn as pink as Earl Cowper's pink breeches. But the polite painter must not have it all his own way: we

[Continued above.]

BY F. H. DROUAI (1727-1775): "CAROLINE LOUISE, MUSGRAVE DE BADE DOURTAC (NÉE PRINCESSE DE HESSE-DARMSTATT), CHARLES LOUIS (NÉ LE 14 FEVRIER 1755) ET FREDERIC (NÉ L'AOUT 1756)."

By Courtesy of S. E. Kennedy, Esq.

make her cumbrous petticoats absurd? Surely one mode is right, the other wrong. Or is there no such thing as wrong and right in the economy of dress? Perhaps every variation of fashion may be justified in the wearing, since the wearer herself is a creature of infinite variety. No rule, certainly, save that of perpetual alteration in dress and the perpetually unalterable, though various, charm of women, can be drawn from this assemblage of portraits. Before Hoppner's "Lady Peacocke" we can say, "How lovely!" with hardly less fervour than in the presence of living beauty. Extraordinarily modern, she survives the passage of more than a hundred years and the passing of a hundred modes.



BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS (1723-1792): MISS MARY HORNECK,
AFTERWARDS MRS. GWYN ("THE JESSAMY BRIDE").
By Courtesy of Viscount Astor.



BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH (1727-1788): "PORTRAITS
OF THE ARTIST'S DAUGHTERS."
By Courtesy of Lord D'Abernon.



BY NICOLAS ELIAS: "LADY WITH A FAN."
By Courtesy of W. C. Alexander, Esq.

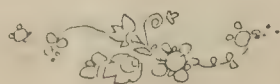


ENGLISH SCHOOL (ABOUT 1780): "LADY IN A BLACK HAT."
By Courtesy of Lord Lee of Fareham.





BY VELASQUEZ (1599-1660): "ISABELLA OF BOURBON."
By Courtesy of Edward Huth, Esq.



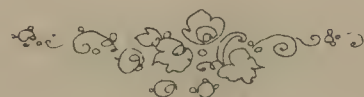
BY FRANCISCO DE ZURBARAN (1598-1661): "PORTRAIT OF A LADY AS ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY."
By Courtesy of the Right Hon. Lord Barrymore.



BY JOHN HOPPNER (1759-1810): "LADY PEACOCKE."
By Courtesy of Sir Philip Sassoon, Bt., M.P.



BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH (1727-1788): "MARY GAINSBOROUGH. AFTERWARDS MRS. FISCHER"
By Courtesy of Adolph Hirsch, Esq.





By Bernardino Luini (1475-1533): "Portrait of a Lady."

BY COURTESY OF R. H. BENSON, ESQ.

The Ash-Grove

By

M. L. C. Pickthall



Illustrated by
Warwick Reynolds

THIS true story might be called "Solitude," or a dozen other things. But I have decided to call it "The Ash Grove," because of Williams.

There is a sort of legend that all the factors of the Hudson Bay Company are Scotchmen. But Williams was a red-headed Welshman, and fond of music.

There is not much music at Fort Delusion. The birds sing in the spring, and in winter the scrub spruce fringing the barrens is a harp for many winds sweeping down from the Pole. The Indians of those parts are a dumb race; of the few white men, fewer yet had music in their souls; only old Father Outardes knew some of the songs they used to sing about the Restigouche in his youth; and it was the songs of his own youth the factor wanted. The trouble of it was that he couldn't get the music out of himself, either by voice or fingers. It just stayed inside and simmered.

An old rhyme has been current for centuries reflecting on the rectitude of the nation to which Williams belonged. Williams was religiously honest in his dealings with all, from his masters in London to the last least half-breed boy who brought him poached beaver-skins for sale. But men who lead the life Williams did are better without any kind of hunger in their insides. And Williams fell at last.

The Reverend Thomas Aylwin was the cause of his fall.

Aylwin was a nice young fellow, with as robust a sense of humour and as dangerous a waiting left as you'd find in the North. The inhabitants of his few hundred miles of parish thought it a mere accident of fate that he was a missionary; until they found themselves meekly attending his services. He was a friend of Williams, and saw him often—sometimes as much as twice a year. However, he knew nothing of the longing for music that preyed on the factor's mind. The living danger of those solitudes is that they make a man dumb. After a few years of it, he would find difficulty in telling his own brother that he had the toothache; it would appear intrusive.

Winter comes early to Fort Delusion. The birds go, and the sun goes, and all men who are fortunate follow these things. The factor remained; and the Reverend Thomas, who had been on furlough for three months, returned to

share the dark months with his flock. The last hundred miles of his journey he made by dog-team. He had two sleds, and an Innuït driver ran alongside singing hymns and snaking a long whip round the well-fed brutes who drew them. He pulled into Fort Delusion in style. And that night, beside the red-hot stove, he showed the factor the gifts he was taking to his converts.

"There's a command, 'Feed my sheep,'" said Williams, twinkling at his young friend, "but you'll be giving them indigestion, Thomas."

"I've never plumbed their capacity for molasses and popcorn," replied the missionary. "But there are other things as well." He displayed knives and dolls to the factor's dazzled eyes, sewing-needles and saucepans. "And here's something," he finished, tapping a large tin case, "which will be food for their higher mental natures—if they have any."

"What is it?" asked Williams curiously.

Flushed with zero and triumph, Aylwin explained.

This was the factor's undoing.

For the rest of the evening he scarcely took his eyes off the tin box. Long after the missionary was asleep, Williams sat and

smoked by the stove; and his eyes, under the red-dish brows, gleamed with a light that grew more reckless and avaricious as the hours advanced. He wrestled with longing as men of old wrestled with the adversary.

Aylwin went on in the morning, and the tin box went too. Williams helped to re-pack the sled. He could scarcely bear to let the box out of his hands. But he would have died sooner than tell Aylwin that he wanted it.

Night came early to Fort Delusion, a night such as only the men of the North know: a great height of black calm, hung with stars like lamps, lit with the unearthly glow and flicker of ceaseless auroras. Fort Delusion looked no bigger than a huddle of match-boxes in the midst of it; the buildings were black; black were the legions of the starveling spruce marching to the frozen tundra; and black the figure and shadow of a man on snowshoes, who left the Fort some six hours behind the missionary and travelled rapidly westward on the trail of the sleds.

That man was the factor; and he was bent on a black deed.



Fort Delusion looked no bigger than a huddle of match-boxes in the midst of it; the buildings were black . . . and black the figure and shadow of a man on snowshoes, who left the Fort some six hours behind the missionary.

As he travelled, now and then he groaned. He talked to himself, as is the custom of men who live much alone. No one who had heard him would have been much the wiser. "*Yn Mhalas Llwyn On gynt, fe drigai pendefig*," muttered Williams; "if he had not said it was that, I would not have done it. And as yet it iss not done. But it will be."

Again, he said, "You will nefer be able to look Thomas in his face again." But the thought had no power to turn him. You could no more have turned Williams now than you could have turned Un-na, the old hunter, from a full bottle.

The trail ran crisp in the snow, and the going was good. However good, Williams could hardly overhaul a strong dog-team headed for home and knowing it. Ahead of him lay a long tongue of the moss-country, not yet hard-set enough for the passage of heavy sleds. Aylwin would have to go round this moss; Williams intended to cross it, and intercept Aylwin on the other side.

He swept on unfaltering in the great stillness of the barrens.

in the wild colours of the aurora. Where the wind had blown, the moss showed its own hues through the snow—from livid grey to magenta. When he had advanced a couple of hundred yards into the open, something made Williams look back as though his head had been pulled by a string.

Five shadows, visible only because they moved against the tree-stems, drifted out of the wood behind him.

Williams swung to the trail hastily. He said, "It is absurd at this time of year. And, anyway, I shall see no more of them. It is the sleds they were following for offal. They were foxes. Big foxes," finished the factor defiantly.

He proceeded with caution over the irregular surface of the moss. Here and there in the lower swales the ground sprang beneath him. He slipped once and wrenched a snowshoe. Pausing to adjust it, again he looked back.

Three long waves of land rose behind him. On the farthest of these he saw a shadow appear; another and another; they were great, high-shouldered shadows; they had an air of being



Five shadows, visible only because they moved against the tree-stems, drifted out of the wood behind him.

His snowshoes sang a whispering song. His fancy added notes to it:

sang the factor's right snow-shoe;

and his left answered,



He muttered strange words. "*A'r llançes yn marw in welw a gwan*," groaned the factor. "I will never hold up my head again. But it does not matter. Llwyn On, and perhaps Eos Lais and Per Alaw Neu Sweet Richard. . . ."

He had reached the edge of the moss-country and was descending to it when he learned that he was not the only traveller abroad that night and following on the track of Aylwin's sleds.

The trail here led him through a belt of denser spruce and bull-pine than he had yet crossed. And at first he did not believe the record of his own senses. It had been a bad year for rabbits, a bad season for deer, who had early changed their feeding grounds; he knew famine hunted in the woods to the south. But that these, the hunters of the hunters, should run on the trail of Man so soon—that was all but incredible. Williams told himself he had been deceived by a shadow, a shimmer of the snow. He put the possibility from his mind. His eyes renewed their dreaming gaze on the distance, his lips their mouth-ing of incorrigible consonants.

He swept out from the edge of the trees. Here he would quit the trail of the sleds; before him lay the barrens, undulating

there by accident. But the factor slipped his gun from its sling and carried it along his arm. He also groaned loudly. His mind was shaken by a profound sense of unrepentant guilt. And his nerve was not so good as usual. He was an ardent chapel-goer when in reach of Bethel; and now, as he went on, he repeated to himself, "This iss judgment on you for your sins."

He wished the judgment could have taken some other form than timber wolves.

He gathered the forces of his steel-and-leather body, and laid the miles behind him. When he stopped and looked back, he saw nothing. The barrens seemed perfectly empty. But all the time he was aware of that noiseless, lounging, inexorable pursuit; of unseen eyes that watched him.

"There are others besides them seeing you, Ieuan Williams," said the factor gloomily, and groaned as they groan in Bethel. But he went on all the same. He was more stubborn after wrong than he had ever been over righteousness.

He passed the moss in three hours and reached a country scantily tree-grown. Here he cast back once more to pick up the trail of the sleds, running due west. He was some time in doing so. The imminence of that dark deed on which he was bent had made all thought of his slinking ghostly pursuers recede from his mind. He found the trail again and followed it some miles.

At last, in a hollow ahead, he saw a little star of firelight, and knew it for Aylwin's first camp.

"Got pe merciful to me a sinner," groaned the factor; and advanced with caution.

[Continued on page 30.]



A CHIP OF THE OLD BLOCK.

FROM THE PAINTING BY EDGAR BUNDY, A.R.A.

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Continued from page 27.]

Aylwin and the driver slept in their sleeping-bags with the two sleds between them. Not a husky was to be seen; they were all scratched deep into the snow on the side of the hollow. Williams' eyes picked out the sled he wanted; it had a runner mended with hoop-iron that glinted a little in the starlight. He drew his blanket-hood forward so that it concealed his face. With his gun ready, and the light flickering on the well-kept barrel, he crept forward noiselessly. He looked a sufficiently desperate figure as he stooped over the sled he sought.

He loosened the sled-cover with the deftness and silence of a well-trained pickpocket. He knew just where the box was. He had put it there himself. He had his hands on it, when a faint sound made him stare at the far sleeping-bag in frozen horror.

He saw a frightened black eye regarding him.

The factor's heart stood still. He gave a suppressed sort of squeak and jumped away, the box in his arms. As he did so, a hand shot out of Aylwin's sleeping-bag and gripped him by the ankle.

Williams fell, still gripping the box; silent, and kicking madly. Aylwin's hand did not relax. He hauled. Williams kicked. His snow-shoe, working loose, flapped in Aylwin's face. The hand relaxed an instant. Williams broke free, leapt to his feet, thrust his toes home in the thongs, and fled like a hare. He had not once loosened his hold on the box.

Aylwin, using unecclesiastical expressions, was getting out of his bag. "You dirty thief!" he yelled. "I'll teach you to rob honest men on the highway!" There was no highway for some three hundred miles. But the missionary was annoyed. He got free of the bag at last, and ran after Williams.

"Cot-pless me," moaned the factor as he fled, "I had not counted on this!"

His supreme fear was that the Reverend Thomas should catch him and recognise him. His one chance against those powerful parsonical legs lay in the fact that Aylwin had no snow-shoes on. The snow on the rocks was only about eight inches deep, and Aylwin was bounding through it like a deer. The factor ran madly for the moss, where Aylwin, if he tried to follow would sink to the knee.

Clutching the box, he glanced back. Far behind them lay the camp; the driver had come out of his bag and stood staring after them, backed by a half-circle of huskies, who had also come out, hoping for trouble. Over all arched a crimson aurora. In its light Aylwin looked about ten feet high as he leapt the drifts in the factor's wake. He even appeared to be gaining. The factor sobbed.

"I must scare Thomas," he said.

He waited his time, dropped the box, swung about, and fired from the hip. The bullet, instead of flicking the snow in front of Thomas, zipped angrily past his foot. He jumped up with a yell and shook his fist at Williams. "You coward!" he roared. By this time he had forgotten that he was a missionary. "Do you think to stop me by that? I'll follow you now till doomsday, and when I've finished with you your own brother won't know you!"

He ran on. The factor also caught up the box and ran.

"I had forgotten," he panted, "that it is not easy to scare Thomass."

Williams was making wonderful time, picking out all the deepest snow. But the dogged missionary would not be shaken off. Whenever Williams looked back, he was there; the distance between them appeared neither to increase nor decrease. Aylwin seemed by instinct to find the rockiest places, where there was scarcely any snow. He carried nothing. And the factor was feeling the weight of the box; but he never even thought of letting it go.

In this manner the chase endured for some four miles. When a thinning of the scattered scraggy trees announced the nearness of the caribou-moss, the factor was half-dead.

He put on a spurt and rushed out into the open. The undulations of the moss spread desolate before him. Here he would be safe. In a little while he would lose sight of Thomas, and put down the box and rest his trembling limbs.

Half-a-mile, and he looked back.

The Reverend Thomas was still coming after him, though much farther behind—indomitable in his just indignation, struggling in the swales.

The factor used strange words. He cried despairingly, "Tevil take him, will he follow me all the way to the Fort?" He turned and rushed on, clutching the box.

He looked back after another mile. Thomas was not to be seen.

"He has fallen into a soft place," said the factor, with criminal satisfaction, hugging the box, "and that will cool him, indeed."

In a quarter of a mile he looked back again. No sign of the Reverend Thomas. The factor said, "I hope he has not hurt himself."

He went on a little longer. Then he remembered something.

"It is impossible," argued Williams; "they would not do it at this time of year."

He continued on his way, but slowly and more slowly. Then, abruptly, he spun round and went back on his own trail. He had just remembered something else. Thomas had no gun.

In twenty minutes the factor, topping a low rise against the stars, dropped his box with a grunt, and fled towards his outraged friend at a speed that made his previous efforts look like walking.

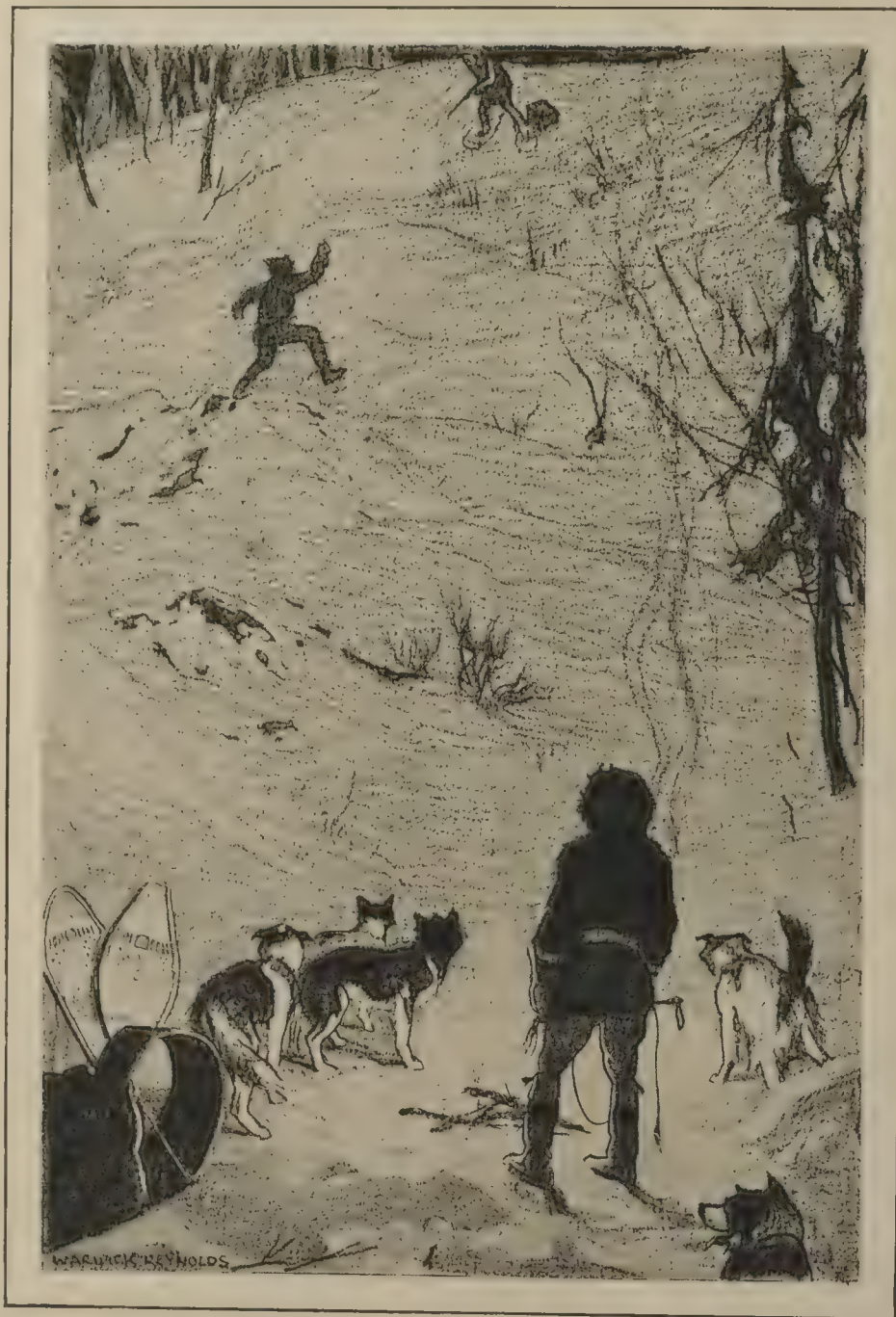
The Reverend Thomas, knee-deep in moss and snow, was standing watchfully, backed against a little thicket of willow bushes. As he came into Williams' vision his foot shot out, and Williams heard a snarling yelp, as if a dog had been kicked. At first it seemed as if the man had struck at air; then the factor's eyes perceived a ceaseless motion in the glimmer, where three gaunt wolves circled just without the missionary's reach—noiseless as shadows—as shadows all but invisible.

At twenty yards the factor dropped to his knee. The trembling was all gone out of him. He was steady as iron as he levelled the gun. Even as he did so, again the wolf sprang half-heartedly at Aylwin, and dropped back. . . .

This time the factor's bullet went where it was meant to go. The report sounded small as the crack of a twig in that tremendous stillness. A wolf yelped, snarled, and fled, biting at its own flank. The others simply disappeared: they were, and were not. Very slowly Williams went towards Aylwin.

When he was within six feet of him, Aylwin spoke.

"It's a good thing you came," he said. "In a few minutes



He waited his time, dropped the box, swung about, and fired from the hip.

they'd have been bolder. . . . And I haven't even a knife with me."

The factor said nothing. The hood hid his face. He stood, a dumb, unrecognisable shadow.

"What," asked the indomitable Aylwin, "have you done with the box you stole off my sled?"

Williams did not answer.

"See here——" began Aylwin, with kindly authority, and reached a hand to the factor's shoulder.

As that hand touched him, terror once more galvanised Williams. He jumped back with a timid grunt. By instinct



The wolf sprang halfheartedly at Aylwin.

his hands seemed to slide down the barrel of his rifle. Swinging it like a club, he swept the missionary's legs from under him, dropped the gun beside him in the snow, and fled once more.

The Reverend Thomas grabbed the gun and was up almost as quick as he was down. But not so quick as the factor streaking away on his snowshoes into the vast mystery of the night. Aylwin watched him, confounded, as he raced up the slope, caught up the box, and vanished. Twice Aylwin raised the gun. Twice he lowered it. "He must be mad," said Aylwin. "That's it. The poor fellow's mad, or he wouldn't have thrown the gun at me. He's not safe without it. There may be more of the brutes about." Here the Reverend Thomas remembered that he was a missionary. "His safety," he declared with energy, "must be a sacred charge to me."

Again he set off after the factor as hard as he could go.

Williams knew nothing of it as he raced for home. Mile after mile he laid behind him to the singing of his snowshoes. Emotion, fatigue, and the thrill of successful crime wrapped his senses in a haze. Now and then he reeled as if drunk, murmuring strange words. He never left go of the box. The hours passed over his head unheeded as the miles beneath his feet. He was borne on the wings of melodies sweeter than he would ever hear, since they were songs of the heart.

He made the Fort long before dawn, though not before the first stir of life. The little chimneys smoked valiantly against the cold, low stars as Williams, clutching the box, staggered at last into his own house and his own room, and collapsed into a chair. He was grey with weariness, but his eyes shone. He took off his snowshoes and his mitts. Without even removing his coat, he set the box on the table and opened it.

His hands were trembling as he lifted out a small gramophone.

He screwed in the horn. There were records packed along the sides of the box. Among these the factor sought, shivering

with eagerness; and at last found what he desired. He read the title on the envelope—

"The Ash Grove. An Ancient Welsh Air. Harp and Voice. . . ." With reverent hands he removed the paper and adjusted it on the machine. He wound the handle. There was a hum, a sharp click, a few faint twanging notes. . . .

Williams sank back in the chair. There were tears on his weather-beaten cheeks. The air stole out into the frosty twilight of that desolate room with something of a fairy effect; a ringing of silvery strings; a call of simple voices far away—O, far away as youth.



"The ash-grove, how graceful, how plainly 'tis speaking,
The wind through it playing has language for me;
Whenever the light through its branches is breaking
A host of kind faces is gazing on me.
The friends of my childhood again are before me:
Each step wakes a mem'ry as freely I roam.
With soft whispers laden, its leaves rustle o'er me.
The ash-grove, the ash-grove alone is my home."

"My home," said Williams, "my home . . ." and bowed his head.

Again and again he worked the charm. Again and again the fairy voice, the ringing of the distant strings, crept to him from his past. He did not heed when it was full day. He did not know when shy hands opened his door, or when that doorway filled with wondering dumb faces, dark faces staring on the factor and the magic he worked.

It held him hour after hour. He did not know when Aylwin, dead-beat and bewildered, reached the Fort; or when his friend's face was added to those in the doorway, gazing into the room.

Aylwin watched a moment, and then went away quietly. It was the time to refrain, even from good words. He knew he had just looked on a man's soul. And he had not yet been long enough at the Apostle's trade to be hardened to the sight.

Williams has a fine gramophone of his own now, and the very mixed inhabitants of Fort Delusion are developing a



He did not know when shy hands opened his door, or when that doorway filled with wondering dumb faces.

nice taste in Welsh music, and can distinguish between "Mae croesawiad gwraig y ty," and "Morva Rhuddlan." He and Aylwin are great friends. But they never speak of the night when the factor stole the missionary's gramophone.

Silence, after all, is sometimes the best music.

[THE END.]

Saint Joan the Maid.—Painted by Kay Nielsen.



HOW JOAN THE MAID OF LORRAINE SAW VISIONS AND WAS CALLED UPON TO DELIVER FRANCE.

"In those days the Lord stirred up the spirit of a certain marvellous Maiden, born on the borders of France, in the duchy of Lorraine, and the see of Toul, towards the Imperial territories. This Maiden her father and mother employed in

tending sheep; daily, too, did she handle the distaff; man's love she knew not; no sin, as it is said, was found in her; to her innocence the neighbours bore witness. . . ."—ANDREW LANG'S "THE MONK OF FIFE."

Saint Joan the Maid.—Painted by Kay Nielsen.

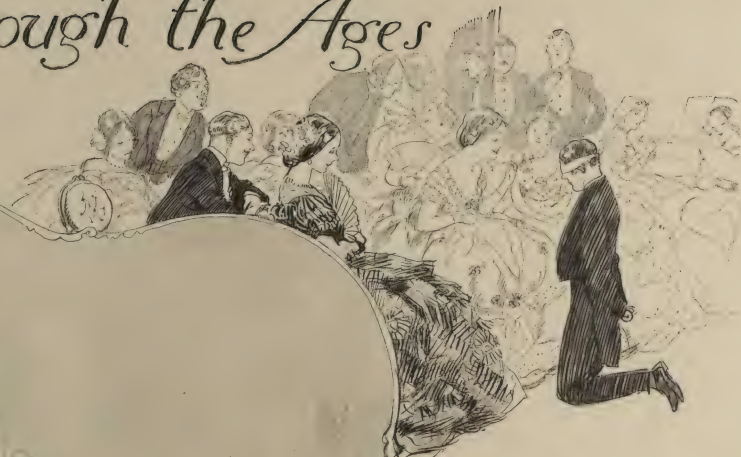


HOW JOAN THE MAID SUFFERED MARTYRDOM AT THE STAKE IN THE MARKET-PLACE OF ROUEN.

"I ever hoped for some miracle, even as her Saints had promised. But it was their will that she should be made perfect through suffering, and being set free through the gate of fire, should win her victory over unfaith and mortal fear. Wherefore I stood afar off at the end, seeing nothing of what befell; yet I clearly heard, as did all men there, the last word of her sweet voice, and the cry of 'Jhesus!'"—ANDREW LANG'S "THE MONK OF FIFE."

Christmas

Through the Ages



Though ever changing in its incidentals, Christmas has always been essentially the same—a season of feasting, fun and frolic. From the days of the Scandinavian Yule log to those of the modern Santa Claus and the tree hung with toys for the children, Christmas has been the time above all others for making merry. Different ages have had their different customs and costumes, and their different sports and

games, but ever since its foundation the spirit of Christmas has remained unaltered. As it was a thousand years ago, so it is today.

DRAWN BY ERNEST H. SHEPARD.

Pearl's

TRANSPARENT
SOAP

Matchless for
The
Complexion





THE RIVALS.

FROM THE PAINTING BY P. MONAHAN.

THOSE who have the privilege of knowing that eminent member of the Bench, Mr. Justice McGoffin, must be aware of that critical and closely reasoning faculty which he brought to bear on everything connected with his profession, and of that curiously innocent, not to say naïve, habit of mind with which he met all matters unconnected with the study of the law.

This innocence led him at times into curious trains of circumstances and into remarkable adventures. It is one of these adventures which we relate.

It happened on a certain occasion that, as he was drifting through the West End in something of a brown study, he paused before the window of a shop which showed for sale those "talking" machines which rejoice—for reasons unknown—in the name Tesiphone. Their open trumpets, pointing in his direction like the mouths of some impish chorus, attracted his attention. Behind these humbler instruments stood others, rather more opulent, without trumpets, but resplendent upon polished mahogany stands. Now, the Judge had often thought that, of all man's many inventions, the "talking" machine was the most startling and wonderful. That a simple box filled with clockwork could reproduce the sounds of the human voice—could become at will great operatic artist or music-hall artist—could, as it were, transport Covent Garden or the Palladium to your back drawing-room—was a phenomenon that set him wondering how far the ultimate limitations of humanity could be pushed back. He paused, therefore, before the window and browsed in thought upon the scene before him. There is no knowing how long he might have stood, had it not been for the fact that, raising his eyes a little, he became conscious that he himself was not unobserved. A damsel of slender build, clad in a neatly-fitting black dress which set off her



ILLUSTRATED BY WILL OWEN.

rather pale face and her glorious crown of golden hair, was standing in the back of the window behind the instruments and was looking at him with, perhaps, the faintest ghost of a smile. Mr. McGoffin was of a refined and sensitive nature. It was not in him to encounter the regard of one of the opposite sex without due acknowledgment. He therefore raised his hat. The damsel smiled and nodded, with what seemed a hint of invitation to him to step inside. He did so. He had not the least idea of what she required him for; but he told himself that that would no doubt be made clear to him when she had spoken to him.

The young lady approached him briskly.

"You wish to buy a Tesiphone?" she asked, in low, sweet tones. "Certainly, Sir. About what price did you require one?"

Mr. McGoffin hesitated.

"I do not know that I actually wished to buy one," he said slowly. "I was rather speculating upon the wonderful ingenuity of man, who by the exercise of his skill is thus able to reproduce the sounds of the human voice."

The young lady smiled a little dubiously.

"I'm afraid you can't realise that properly until you possess an instrument of your own," she said, still sweetly. "For example——!" She touched the spring of a mahogany box at her elbow, which at once bellowed forth a rollicking sea song in a deep bass voice. The Judge retreated a step in alarm. "The price of that one," continued the young lady, "is twenty-five

guineas. But perhaps you would prefer something larger?"

"Not at all!" said Mr. McGoffin. "Not at all! That one makes quite a noise."

"A beautiful instrument," remarked the damsel with great self-possession. "An ornament to any home. Where shall we send it to?"

"Well, really——!" began the Judge.

"It can be delivered anywhere within the four-mile radius this evening," went on the damsel, quietly. "And no doubt you would like a few records?"

"Well, yes," replied Mr. McGoffin, somewhat hesitatingly. "Yes, I should certainly like a few records—that is, if I bought the—er—instrument."

"A few records," answered the damsel in a business-like voice. "Shall we say three dozen? Perhaps you would like to hear some more?" The bass voice had by this time bellowed its way through the sea song, and was now in harbour, making a kind of scratching noise. Very deftly the young lady stopped it. "Three dozen records," she continued; "and for choice? Operatic, comic, elocutionary—or a selection?"

"I think," said Mr. McGoffin uneasily, "that I will give the matter further consideration. I will—er—call again in the course of a few days and—er—see you again."

"You may call, Sir," said the damsel, with a slight touch of hauteur, "but I am much afraid that you will not see me again. I leave to-morrow to take up the charge of one of our most important branches in the North. I should therefore be glad to settle this matter with you now. I assure you that if you buy one of our Tesiphones you will never regret it. I should advise you not to put it off. The demand is so great that this machine may be gone by the time you call. And why should you put off until to-morrow what you can do to-day?"

"True!" said the Judge, much struck by

(Continued overleaf.)

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the profundity of this remark. "True! I had not thought of that. It is a principle that might well be adopted by many people as their guide in life."

"Then take it as yours," replied the young lady, smiling sweetly. "If you will give me your address, I will see that the machine is delivered this evening."

Mr. Justice McGoffin gave his name and address, handed over certain notes, and left the shop, somewhat astonished at his enterprise in having in so short a time become the possessor of one of these marvellous instruments. He had just reached his home when he recollected that he had not learnt the name of the fair-haired young lady, nor even of the shop in which she served. In fact, if it had not been for a very perceptible difference in the weight of his pocket-book, he might have imagined the whole thing to be a dream. He was absent-minded during dinner. With the coffee, he forgot the whole thing entirely. And it was not until an hour later, when a somewhat red-faced butler and two stout draymen bore the instrument into his study, that he was reminded of it.

Dismissing the bearers and the butler, he remained for some time in contemplation of his new purchase. His first move was to unpack a parcel of records which accompanied it. He then turned his attention to the machine itself. The front of the cabinet was made of open bars. The top was occupied by something like a roulette wheel. There was a handle at the side which invited him to turn it. He did so, but produced no sound. Opening a drawer, two boxes filled with finely pointed steel needles fell out and scattered their contents on the carpet. Mr. McGoffin was forced to spend a full five minutes in gathering them up again. At length, however, he did so, gathered their use also, inserted one in its proper place, put a record on the machine, and was rewarded. A high tenor voice rose upon the air, filling the room with sweetness to an accompaniment of vague scratchings and whinings. It wailed marvellously through a love song, becoming momentarily flatter, until it finished in an indistinguishable bass. When it ended, the record went round and round without further remarks or vocalisation, and the Judge fiddled with various

small fittings until he came to the one that stopped it. After which, for quite three minutes, the Judge and the machine were silent.

"Dear me!" said Mr. McGoffin at last. "Dear me! The young man who sang that song appears to have an immense range!"

He put on another record—a pianoforte one this time—and listened attentively to what appeared to be the ghost of a banjo, rather



What remained of him . . . now appeared before Mr. McGoffin in the dock.

badly out of tune. After which he got a little discouraged, and, retreating to his arm-chair, endeavoured to forget the whole affair.

In this he was entirely successful, for, in truth, his capacity for forgetting the ordinary events of daily life was remarkable. The Tesiphone remained in his room unnoticed for month after month. After a little time he could not have told you how long it had been there or where he

had obtained it. Until, almost a year later, a series of events occurred which brought the transaction vividly to his mind.

It was in one of the most important of our northern cities that these events occurred. I need not specify it more precisely than to say that it is distinguished alike by the hideousness of its architecture and the insane civic pride of its inhabitants. The Judge had arrived at this night-mare, on circuit. And it was at the Assizes held in this town that one of those distressing cases of assault not uncommon in that locality came before him. It is not our purpose to go too closely into details. Sufficient to state that a young lady had been attacked by a man whilst returning from her work along a canal bank that led from the city to one of the suburbs. She had resisted her assailant with courage and persistence, and her cries had brought to her aid two bargees, who, with the innate chivalry of their class and calling, had rescued the maiden and almost kicked the villain to death. What remained of him had been handed over to the police, and now appeared before Mr. McGoffin in the dock—a singularly unassuming person of middle stature, with a hot blue eye, and rather long fair hair brushed *en brosse* off his forehead. The young lady gave her evidence with a certain hauteur and a becomingly modest reluctance. She did not look at the prisoner except when directed to do so for the purpose of identification. For the most part she kept her eye upon the Judge. And in Mr. McGoffin's brain there came a vague recollection.

Asked—if she knew the prisoner? Answered—No! Had she ever seen him before the assault? Not to her knowledge. (Loud protests from the prisoner silenced by the Judge.) Had she ever been followed by this man before? No! Or by any man? Oh, yes—often! Had she been frightened? Very much so. Did she think she was in danger of her life? Was not certain whether she was in danger of her life, but knew she was in danger. Quite so.

The prisoner elected to go into the witness box, and was allowed to make a statement. He was not guilty—at least of the charge which had been brought against him. He had always been a most moral man, and could produce testimonials from clergymen. He was a musician. Happening

(Continued overleaf).

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FREE



There is not the least difficulty in obtaining one of these Free 4-in-1 Gifts of Beauty, for all you have to do is to send your name and address, with 4d. in stamps and the following coupon, and a Free Fourfold Seven Days' Trial "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfit will at once be dispatched to you.

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Not a single moment should be lost by any man or woman who has not yet seen how "Harlene Hair-Drill" works a literal "transformation" in the hair in writing for one of these hair-beautifying "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfits now so generously offered.

EVERY WOMAN who tries "Harlene Hair-Drill" is surprised and delighted at the speedy improvement in the richness, the luxuriance, the strength, and the radiance of her hair. They are amazed, too, at the comparatively speedy way "Harlene Hair-Drill" revives and revitalises their hair.

The hair "glows" with its richness of colour. It becomes "living" hair, not hair that is dull, lifeless and half-dead.

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If your hair is Grey, Faded, or quickly losing its Colour, you should try at once the wonderful new liquid compound, "Astol," a remarkable discovery which gives back to grey hair new life and colour in a quick and natural manner. You can try "Astol" free of charge by enclosing an extra 2d. stamp for the postage and packing of the "Harlene Hair Drill" parcel—i.e., 6d. stamps in all—when in addition to the splendid 4-Fold Gift described in this announcement, a trial bottle of "Astol" will also be included absolutely free of charge.

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Illustrated London News, Christmas, 1920.
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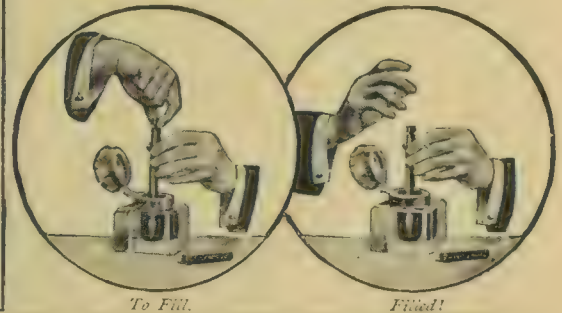
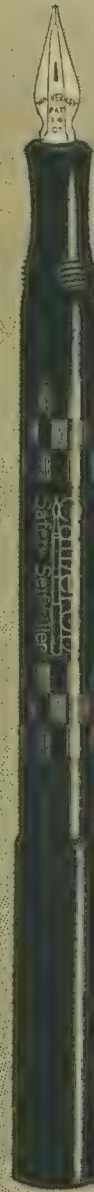
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to pass the window of a "talking" machine establishment in one of the principal streets, he had seen the young lady in the window and she had beckoned him in. (Indignant protests from the young lady.) He had gone in under the impression that she wished to speak to him, and had then and there, almost without volition on his part, been forced to buy a Tesiphone. He had taken it home with him, along with some assorted records, and had tried them. For all the use the cursed thing had been, it might as well have been a sewing-machine. He had followed the young lady purely out of a feeling of revenge. He was guilty of attempted murder—no more! He had suffered greatly from his character having been called in question. In view of the purity of his motives and the character of the instrument sold him, he did not think he was guilty of attempted murder, after all. He thought a verdict of justifiable homicide would meet the case.

Mr. Justice McGoffin questioned him sternly. Did he mean to imply that a sewing-machine was a useless instrument? He, the Judge, had heard that it was a thing much valued by ladies.

The prisoner was understood to answer that as a musical instrument a sewing-machine was a failure.

Mr. McGoffin thereupon asked him if he had actually bought a sewing-machine as a musical instrument.

The prisoner replied that he had not bought a sewing-machine, but a Tesiphone.

Mr. McGoffin inquired why he had bought a Tesiphone if he wished for a sewing-machine.

The prisoner replied, "Good God!"

Mr. McGoffin ordered him sternly to stand down, and added a caution against the use of bad language in that court.

The first of the two bargees was then examined. His evidence was short and to the point. He had seen a man struggling with a young lady on the canal bank. It was, in his opinion, "a bit of a Barney." He had interfered? He had. He and his mate had "purred" (a local expression implying "kicked")

the man all over. Why had he done so? He had done so because he was an Englishman; and no Englishman would have done anything else.

The second bargee corroborated. He, too, had seen the struggle. He, too, had kicked the prisoner. He, too, was an Englishman.

At the request of the Court, the young lady was recalled. Mr. McGoffin proceeded to put further questions. Did she sell sewing-machines or Tesiphones? She sold Tesiphones. Was there

Though, now he came to think of it, he also had never tried.

In answer to further questions, the young lady informed the Court that the Tesiphone she had sold to the prisoner was in court and could be produced. Mr. McGoffin ordered its production. A record was placed upon it by the direction of the Judge, and the jury were directed to listen to it carefully and to form their opinions as to whether its performance afforded any justification for the attack complained of. The record was set going, and the machine burst forth.

We need not go too deeply into the painful scene that followed. The comic song delivered had been a popular success during the preceding winter, and had for its theme judicial folly, basing itself mainly on a ruling given by Mr. McGoffin in a sensational case some months before. Each verse ascribed to an imaginary Justice characteristics attributable either to softening of the brain or to bribery. At the end of the second verse the public was dissolved in mirth, and the Bench in anger. At the commencement of the third verse the record was stopped.

The case was stopped also. Mr. McGoffin charged the jury. He informed them that the instrument was obviously not a sewing-machine—that no sewing-machine could be half as offensive. He pointed out that if the jury thought as he did, the prisoner had had ample justification for his attack. He, the

Judge, might have acted in the same manner as the prisoner under similar provocation. The two Englishmen had shown in their meddling interference some of the worst characteristics of their race. If the jury found all this—as they were bound to find it—they would discharge the prisoner without a stain on his character. With confidence he left it to them as upright subjects of his Majesty the King and as respecters of the King's Law. The jury concurred without leaving the Court. The prisoner was discharged. The young lady was cautioned.

[THE END.]



A record was placed upon it by the direction of the Judge, and the jury were directed to listen to it carefully.

any possibility of mistaking her Tesiphones for sewing-machines? Certainly not. Why, then, had the prisoner done so? She did not know. Was it possible to sew with them? No. Had she ever tried? She had not tried. Yet she was prepared to state that it was impossible? She was. Had she ever sold any Tesiphones to anyone in that court who could speak to their merits? Yes; she had sold one to his Lordship. (Sensation in Court.) Mr. McGoffin gazed at her earnestly, and at once corroborated her statement. The young lady had sold him a Tesiphone, and he also had never been able to sew with it.

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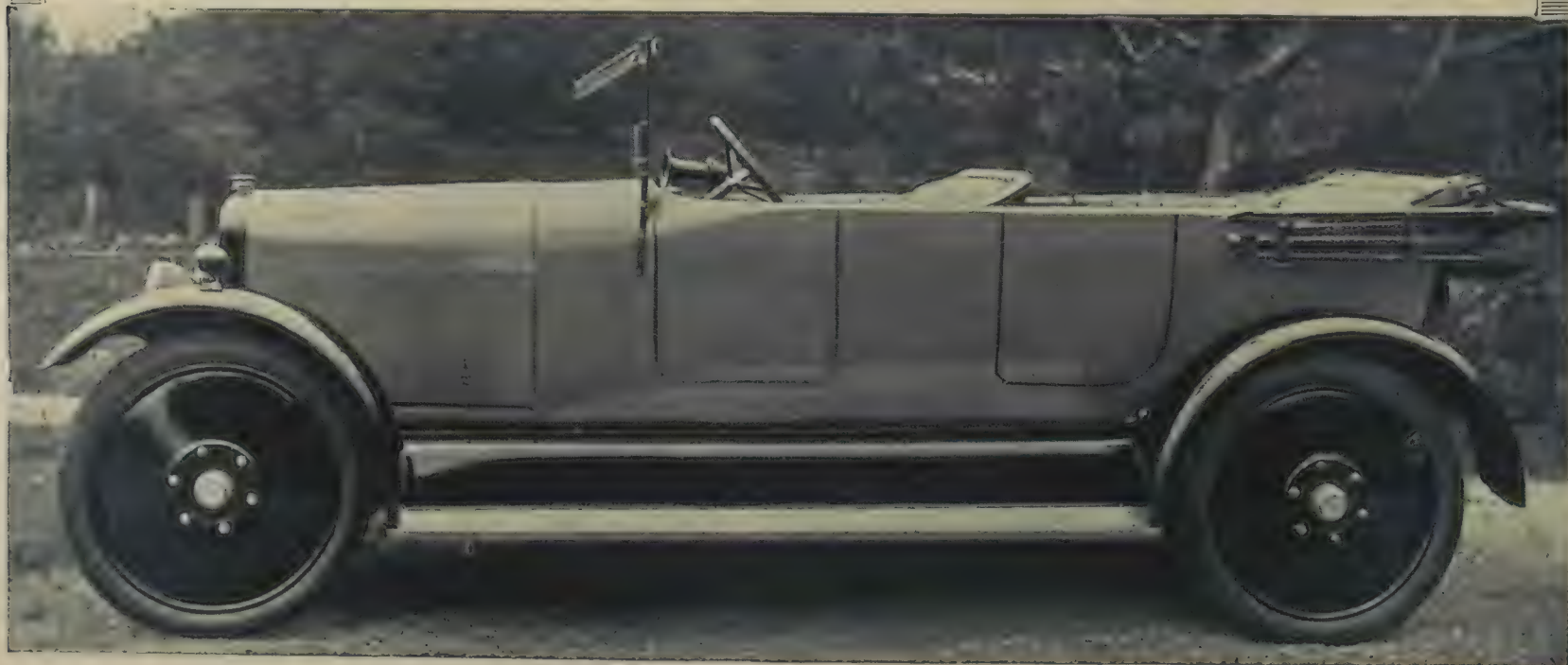
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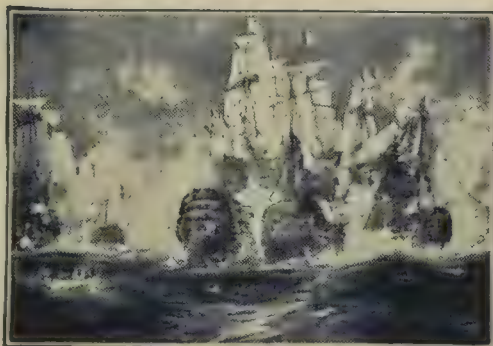
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"TWAS IN TRAFALGAR'S BAY."

By Charles Dixon, R.I.

In this picture, Mr. Charles Dixon, the well-known seascape artist, has chosen for his subject the scene at the fatal moment when Lord Nelson was mortally wounded by a shot fired by a French marine from the mizzenmast of the "Redoubtable."

The "Victory" and the "Redoubtable" will be seen locked together. To the right is the famous "Temeraire," whilst to the left is the French ship "Bucentaure" and the Spanish ship "Trinidad."

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THE CHILD WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE!

FROM THE DRAWING BY WALLIS MILLS.

From Barrie's New Fairyology
We learn that sinful unbelief
In fairies (witness Tinker B.)
Stirs Fairyland to rage and grief.
Peaseblossom, Moth and Mustardseed,
Good Master Cobweb and the rest,
Of mortal children's faith have need
For bare existence, whence the test

Is put to children at the play:
"Do you in fairy folk believe?
For if you don't, they'll fade away:
Your faith confess, and so retrieve
The flickering spark of Tinker Bell,
Who's dying, dying, all but dead!"
Their saving Creed they shout; all's well.
The tree-tops chime, and Wendy's wed.

Far from the play of Peter keep
The sceptic child, if such there be,
Who, caring not how fairies weep
For Unbelief's perversity,
Denies them, flouts the fairy tale
And flutters to a wild unrest
The Little World beyond the pale
Of Christendom, yet not unblest.

Into this dark and deadly crime
Did Doubting Thomasina fall,
But she repented, just in time,
On hearing Queen Titania call
Her Elfin Guardian of the Peace
To note the case for punishment;
For elves can pinch, and their Police
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*have been delineated by the brushes of generations
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CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL

FROM THE PAINTING BY W. I. WEBSTER



A CHRISTMAS TALE.

WE have it on the authority of Kitchin's "History of France" that on Christmas Eve, 1245, King Louis IX bade all his Court be present at early morning mass. At the Chapel door each man received a gift of a new cloak, put it on, and went in to worship. Thus Christmas came to be known in France as "the day of new clothes." In the modernised version of the custom we regard Christmas as "the day of new cars," for at this season of joviality and good cheer and gift-giving the motor-car is an offering that is peculiarly appropriate and acceptable.

Motoring is an all-the-year-round pastime. It never goes out of fashion. Unfortunately for himself, Mr. Pickwick lived at a time when motor-cars did not even enter into the dreams of the most imaginative of persons; but here the artist has given us a fanciful picture of that inimitable gentleman arriving at his favourite inn on a brand new 11.9 Bean car, and we doubt not that, had Mr. Pickwick lived to-day, his good taste and his keen appreciation of personal comfort would have induced him to pin his faith to the car which has come to be known as "the leader of its class."

"Hello Kiddies
I've been shopping!"



Six good things!

BIRD'S Custard

Purity itself; "the only Custard that tastes as good as it looks."

BIRD'S Blanc-Mange

Smooth as a junket. A fascinating dish full of flavor, and so creamy.

BIRD'S Crystal Jelly Powder

Dissolves instantly, making jelly "in a jiffy" with the flavor of the fresh fruit.

BIRD'S "Spongie"

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A RIDE IN SANTA CLAUS'S SLEIGH.

DRAWN BY G. C. WILMSHURST.

I.
THERE is no disguising the fact that Celestia was a spoilt child. How could it have been otherwise? She was the only child of her parents, and her father was a millionaire. All the money he made, all the property he owned, everything that he did was inspired by the mere existence of Celestia. Her mother died when she was five.

My story opens when she was nearly nine. Between the ages of five and nearly nine Celestia had ransacked the pleasures of the world—her world—and exhausted them one by one.

The top storey of every house possessed by her father was filled with toys that Celestia had either discarded or destroyed. The only toys she never destroyed were live animals. She had grown tired of ponies, dogs, cats, pigs, rabbits, rats, mice and birds, but she could never be cruel to them. They were all carefully tended each day by a staff of persons engaged for that especial purpose.

At the approach of her ninth birthday—that is to say, some three months before the event—Celestia's father began to get a little rattled. Celestia, of course, had a present every day of her life, but on her birthday she expected a very special present. This birthday present, moreover, had to be a surprise. Celestia knew nothing about it until the morning of the glad day, and then it burst upon her in all its glory or its freakishness, as the case might be.

Being rattled, Celestia's father decided to hold a Cabinet Council. He summoned to his study his Private Secretary, his Public Secretary, his Steward, his Major-Domo, his Butler, and Celestia's Head Governess.

"I want you all," he said, "to use your brains for once. My daughter's birthday is approaching, and, for the life of me, I can think of nothing to give her which she does not already possess. Dangerous toys, such as motor-cars, yachts, flying-machines, and so forth, are barred. So are wild animals. With those exceptions, let your imaginations run riot. We will meet again to-day week at this hour."

The Cabinet broke up and went away to think.



The Child who Bought a Policeman

By
Keble Howard
Illustrated by
Chas. Crombie.



For the next seven days they were to be found in all sorts of unexpected corners, holding their heads. The Major-Domo, who had ascended to the roof for peace and quietness, very nearly fell off and broke his neck in the desperate effort



For the next seven days they were to be found in all sorts of unexpected corners, holding their heads.

it with birds of the most gorgeous plumage from every clime."

"Rot!" replied Celestia's father. "There's no time to get them except from the 'Zoo,' and they wouldn't sell. Besides, she's got a whole lot of birds now. And birds are not very wholesome company for children. I will hear the Major-Domo. I am told he nearly broke his neck over this business, so he must have some ideas."

"Sir," said the Major-Domo, "it was not in vain that I ascended to the roof-top. I think Miss Celestia would be highly delighted with a house that stood on its head. She would enter at the garret window, and walk upstairs to the cellar."

"Have you quite finished?"

"Yes, Sir. The details would come later."

Celestia's father turned to his Private Secretary.

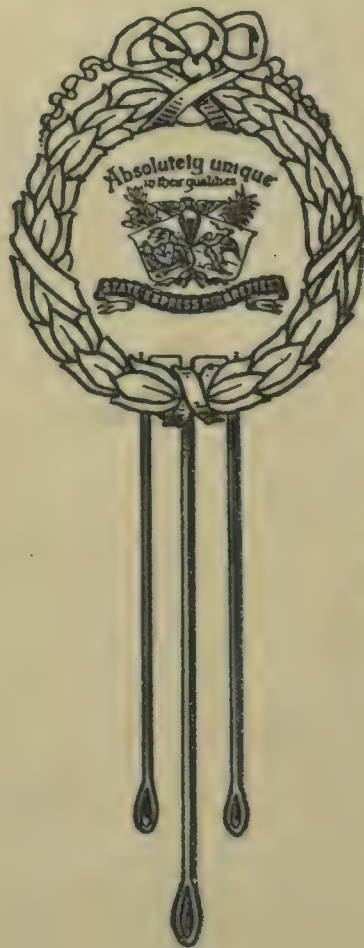
"Immediately after the meeting," he instructed, "ring up Hanwell Asylum and ask them to send a van with two attendants. We will now hear you yourself."

"Sir," said the Private Secretary, "I have a quite novel idea. I suggest that you instal a telephone exchange, complete with switch-board and lines to all parts of the house. Miss Celestia could be the clerk-in-charge. We would all ring her up, and she could switch us through to the wrong numbers."

This notion met with applause, instantly suppressed. Celestia's father pointed out that his child, after all, was human. He did not wish her to become cold, callous, and cynical before her time. He then heard the Butler.

"Sir," said the Butler, "I once escorted Miss Celestia through the cellars. The havoc she created in less than twenty minutes with the

(Continued overleaf.)



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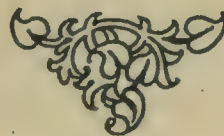
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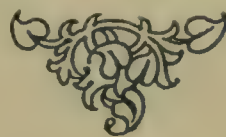
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pipes of port seemed to cause her great pleasure. How would it be to rig up a shooting-gallery with full bottles of champagne, 1911 vintage, and get a model machine-gun—"

"My good man, it is true that I am a millionaire, but some toys are beyond even my purse. Miss Galsworthy?"

"Sir," said the Head Governess, "I am about to startle you. Send for Miss Celestia and ask her to name her own present."

"Excellent!" cried the millionaire. "We can no longer surprise her, but there is every possibility that she may surprise us. Let her be fetched."

Celestia, very demure in a little white frock, walked gravely up the library and took her seat in a splendid carved chair at the head of the table. The staff, who had risen as she entered, bowed low and resumed their seats.

have given themselves headaches for nothing—nothing, that is to say, beyond their exorbitant salaries. I have therefore decided, on the advice of Miss Galsworthy, to ask you to name your wish."

"I should like—" said Celestia.

They all leaned forward. A pin crashed to the floor.

"I should like—" The Butler swooned from sheer suspense.

"I should like—a Policeman."

"Very good, my child," replied the millionaire. "You shall have a Policeman of your very own."

"Fat," added Celestia, "with a truncheon and a lantern."

II.

THERE was no particular difficulty about obtaining a policeman. The fattest policemen, as everybody knows, are employed at the National Gallery, the British Museum, and places of a similarly gentle nature. The worst of it is that in course of time they get too fat to pass through the turnstiles, and then have to be pensioned off.

Celestia's Policeman had reached this precise stage in his career. He was not too old for his job, but he was too fat for it, and the Force was glad to part with him, uniform, truncheon, and lantern complete, for a hundred pounds. It was the cheapest birthday present Celestia's father had ever purchased.

When Celestia awoke on the morning of her birthday, she jumped out of bed, rushed to the window, and there was the Policeman standing in the garden.

"Good - morning, Miss," said the Policeman, and touched his helmet.

Celestia clapped

her hands. "How beautiful!" she breathed.

The Policeman smiled in a gratified way, and adjusted his tunic.



"Policeman," she exclaimed, "you're getting thin!"

"You're the fattest Policeman I ever saw," added Celestia. "Turn sideways on, please."

He obeyed, and the spectacle he presented was enchanting even to the *blasée* nine-year-old daughter of a millionaire.

"Now walk!" ordered Celestia. "Lift your feet up! Draw your truncheon! Every time you pass the window you must salute!"

It was difficult to get her dressed that morning. She had her bath brought to the window so that she need never take her eyes off the Policeman. Once he ventured to stop and mop his brow, but she hammered on the glass imperiously, and off he went again.

Nothing would satisfy Celestia but that the Policeman should come to breakfast. So they had it together, and Celestia managed to extract a good deal of information about policemen.

"Do they all eat as much as you?" she asked.

"As much as me? Why, bless yer, Missie, I'm dainty, I am! There's one of my mates can put away a whole cold meat pie in less than ten minutes! 'Cookie's Terror,' we calls 'im."

[Continued on page 56]



She fetched the picture book, and showed them both how it should be done by the best cooks and the most expensive policemen.

"Celestia," said her father, "we are at our wits' end. We cannot think what to buy you for a birthday present. All these good people



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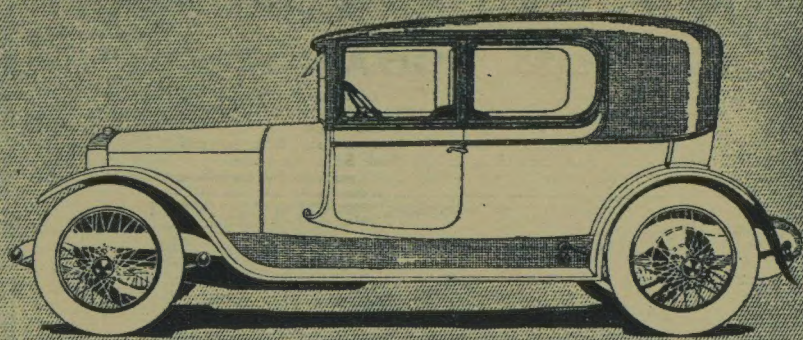
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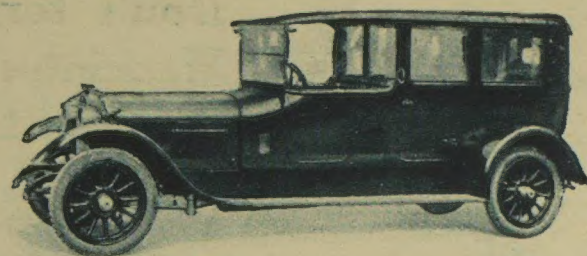
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L.C. 11

"Why do you call him that?"

"Why?" Here the Policeman winked at the Footman. "You ask any cook, Missie—any female cook, I should say."

"Our cook is a female. Would you like to meet her?"

"Oh, as to that, Missie, any time will do. Don't you worry your dear little head. No doubt I shall run across her this evening about supper-time."

"Ah, but I must be there," explained Celestia. "There's a picture in one of my books of a cook and a policeman. They're kissing. Do cooks and policemen always kiss?"

"Well, Missie, that depends."

"On the cook or the policeman?"

"As a rule, Missie, on the cook."

"Our cook does as I tell her. What are you laughing at, George?"

"I wasn't laughing, Miss Celestia," protested the Footman. "I only burnt my finger with a hot plate."

"If you do it again, I shall have you taken up. Now go away and send Cook here. Tell her to put on a nice blue print dress, and her whitest cap and apron. You'd better go and wash your hands and brush your hair, Policeman. The one in my book hasn't got jam on his fingers."

Cook was a little flustered at first and inclined to be coy, but the Policeman, egged on by Celestia, drove her into a corner and scrambled for a kiss. This was capital as far as it went, but Celestia was not fully satisfied. She fetched the picture-book, and showed them both how it should be done by the best cooks and the most expensive policemen. So they tried again, with better results this time, until at last Cook dashed out of the room and slammed the door behind her.

For nearly a week Celestia amused herself with the Policeman. She took him for a walk and made him hold up the traffic whilst she slowly



He became quite useless as a toy, and found his place with all the other rubbish in the attics.

and daintily crossed the street. The Footman was dressed as a tramp, simulated drunken fury, and was arrested with realistic ferocity. Then Celestia pretended that the house was being

watched by burglars, and the Policeman had to walk round and round it all night long with his lantern flashing in every direction.

At the end of a week, whilst he was standing guard over the Head Gardener, who had been incarcerated in the summer-house and fed through a crevice in the wall, Celestia suddenly stopped short and stared at her birthday present with horror.

"Policeman," she exclaimed, "you're getting thin!"

"Yes, Missie, I know I am."

"What d'you mean by it?"

"I'm very sorry, Missie, but I'm not surprised."

"Why aren't you?"

"Well, Missie, for one thing, I'm never off duty. When it isn't drunks it's burglars, and when it isn't burglars it's Cook."

"What difference does Cook make? You told me only yesterday she was a nice, homely party."

"So she is, Miss. That's just it. A man can't go on kissing a nice party like that without falling in love with 'er, and falling in love makes a man thin quicker than anything. If I might suggest, Miss—"

"Well? Don't blush, Policeman."

"I'll try not, Miss. If I might suggest, would you give Cook instructions as she's to marry me? I wouldn't interfere with her work. She could still go on cooking for yer Pa."

So the order was given, and, after becoming protestations, obeyed, and the Policeman grew stouter than ever. So stout, in fact, that he became quite useless as a toy, and found his place with all the other rubbish in the attics.

But Celestia didn't fret. She was far more delighted with a very wiry, astoundingly brave, and highly polished Fireman.

[THE END.]

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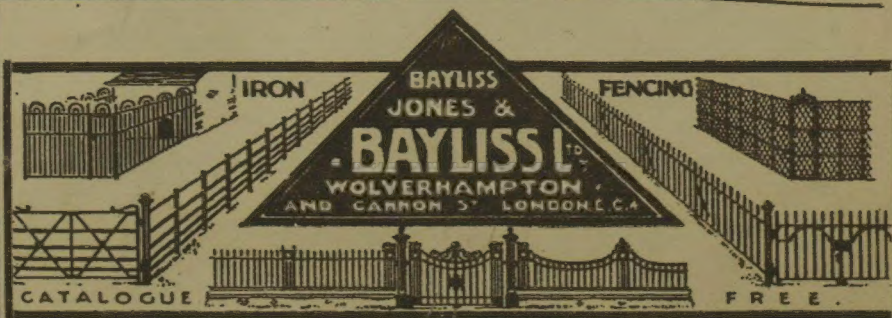
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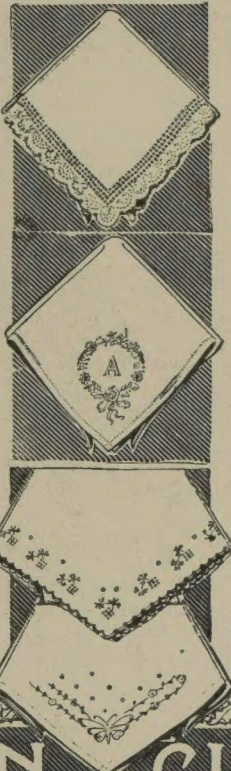
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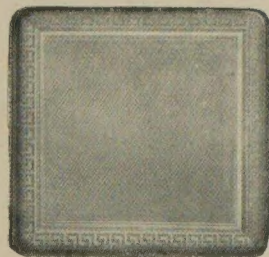
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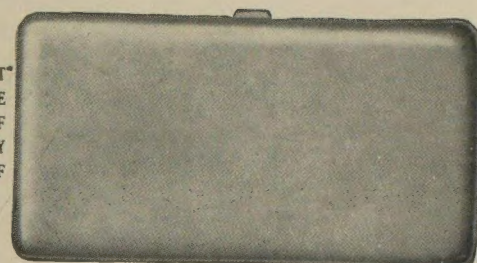


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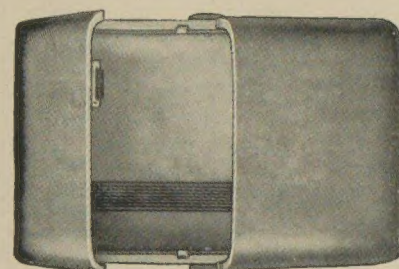
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